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Replies to initial questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2024-25

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Security

Session No. : 16

Consolidated e-file name : SB-2-e1.docx

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB046

(Question Serial No. 2463)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Police announced in 2018 that dedicated investigation teams had been set up in the 22 Police Districts with criminal investigation teams across the territory to handle cases of animal cruelty. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. The number of officers involved in handling cases of cruelty to animals in each Police District;
2. The numbers of cases received, handled and prosecuted over the past 3 years, respectively;
3. The training courses that the investigation teams have attended, including the content of these courses;
4. The frequency of liaison and co-operation with other government departments and organisations through the Animal Watch Scheme each year;
5. The strategies devised and activities organised under the Animal Watchers Programme in the past year, the respective expenditures, and whether evaluation was conducted; if so, the details; if not, the reasons; and
6. The measures that the Police will implement to adapt to the amendment of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance later this year, including whether there are plans to establish an animal police team to investigate animal cruelty cases in a more proactive and professional manner.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

1. To combat acts of cruelty to animals, the Police Force has established dedicated crime investigation teams in 22 police districts to handle relevant cases. The Animal Crime Police Teams are comprised of officers with experiences in investigating and handling serious crimes. The establishment of Animal Crime Police Team varies in different police districts. In general, a team comprises 1 Inspector, 1 Sergeant and 4 to 6 Police

Constables. The Force will review the manpower deployment from time to time and make appropriate deployment to meet operational needs.

2. The numbers of cases on cruelty to animals reported to the Force, persons arrested and prosecutions instituted under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance for the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Number of cases reported	88	54	74
Number of persons arrested	55	32	60
Number of prosecutions instituted	21	20	17 (as at third quarter)

3. On education and training, the Force has invited officers from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) to explain to the trainees of training programmes the laws related to cruelty to animals, skills in handling animals, experience in case investigation, and the inter-departmental co-operation mechanism. The Force also organises seminars from time to time and invites relevant officers from AFCD, SPCA and the Animal Crime Police Teams to share their experience so that the officers of the Animal Crime Police Teams can have a better grasp of the latest situation and trend of cruelty to animals.
4. In collaboration with AFCD, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, SPCA, veterinarian associations and animal concern groups, the Force introduced the Animal Watch Scheme (the Scheme) in 2011 to combat cruelty to animals. Later on, the College of Veterinary Medicine and Life Sciences of City University of Hong Kong was also invited to join the Scheme. The Scheme aims at consolidating co-operation among various stakeholders through a multi-pronged approach of education, training, publicity, intelligence gathering and investigation, as well as enhancing the efficacy of the Force's efforts in the investigation of such cases. The Force does not maintain the other breakdown requested in the question.
5. To enlist public support and assistance in combating acts of cruelty to animals, the Force implemented the Animal Watchers Programme (AWP) in 2021, with a view to agglomerating the strengths of animals lovers at the community level and on online social media platforms in the 4 directions of education, publicity, intelligence-gathering and investigation; raising public awareness on prevention of cruelty to animals; and encouraging the public to report in a timely manner and provide information that could help investigations. Through organising territory-wide large-scale events involving different communities and age groups, AWP aims to strengthen the awareness and care of the general public on the issue of cruelty to animals and animal welfare, as well as to disseminate the message of prevention of cruelty to animals effectively to the public.

In 2023, AWP initiated the "Synergy for Great" initiative, collaborating with various organisations to introduce the "Life-wide Animal Care College" educational programmes. This initiative featured the "Adventure King Summer Camp", educational seminars, visits

to the veterinary medical centre, and the “Hang-in-there Charity Challenge” in observance of World Animal Day.

The expenditure involved falls under the Programme of “Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community”. No specific breakdown is available.

The Force will continue raise awareness of preventing cruelty to animals through AWP and adopt a multifaceted approach in evaluating its effectiveness by a variety of indicators, including the numbers of cases reported and persons arrested as well as the level of overall public engagement. At present, most of the cases of cruelty to animals are reported to the Force by members of the public who voluntarily offer information for investigation. This shows that AWP has a significant impact on enhancing police-community co-operation and raising public awareness of combating cruelty to animals.

6. The Animal Crime Police Teams are responsible for the law enforcement of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169). A sharing platform is available among the Animal Crime Police Teams of different police districts for them to share their investigative experience. The Force also provides specialised trainings on handling of cases of animal cruelty to the investigating officers to ensure the officers can carry out comprehensive investigations into these cases. In addition, the Force, AFCD and SPCA have established a co-operation mechanism whereby AFCD and SPCA officers provide professional advice and assist in investigation at the scene of an animal cruelty case where necessary.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB047

(Question Serial No. 3123)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses
Programme: (3) Road Safety
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Government has indicated the installation of 2 000 closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs) at various locations across the territory within the current year. In this connection, please advise this Committee:

- of the estimated expenditure;
- whether policy objectives, e.g. crime detection rate, have been devised for the installation of CCTVs; if so, the details; if not, the reasons; and
- whether collaboration with other government departments is considered for the joint installation of CCTVs to enhance law enforcement efficiency; if so, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

To further enhance law and order and combat crime in a holistic manner, the Government plans to install closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs) in public places with high crime rate and pedestrian flow in all 18 districts in Hong Kong, with a view to safeguarding public security and enhancing crime prevention and detection.

At the initial stage, CCTVs will be installed at 615 locations with high crime figures territory-wide. Among them, the Police Force will install the first 15 sets of CCTV cameras in Mong Kok during March and April 2024 for testing the technicality, and then progressively commence the installation of the remaining 600 sets of CCTV cameras in mid-2024 after optimisation of the operation.

The Force has obtained approval for the initial stage of installation which includes the installation of front cameras and related equipment, back-end devices, management systems, etc. The Government will continue to review the remaining stages of installation and further arrangements will be made upon taking the financial resources and operational experience into account. As the estimated expenditure involves internal operational details of the Government and is classified as sensitive information, it is not appropriate to disclose such information.

Overseas experience suggests that the use of CCTVs to assist in law enforcement in different countries and regions has yielded remarkable results. For example, Mainland China has recorded a decrease of more than 40% in the number of some serious offences; whilst other regions (e.g. the United Kingdom, Macao and Singapore) have also seen a significant increase in the number of crime cases detected with the use of CCTVs.

As regards the feasibility of other government departments using the CCTVs, given the varied operational needs of different departments, the Force will examine individual cases in accordance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and facilitate the enforcement actions of different departments in ways such as arranging for relevant departments to watch or record videos shot by the CCTVs. The Force will strictly observe relevant legislation to ensure that privacy of members of the public is fully protected.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB048

(Question Serial No. 3124)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses
Programme: (4) Operations
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the Operations under this Programme, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. Details on the specific ranks, formations and duties in respect of the decrease of 228 posts under Programme (4), as well as the measures in place to maintain current service standards with reduced manpower.
2. Information on the joint exercises conducted on land or at sea by the Police with Mainland authorities and other government departments in the past year to tackle illegal immigration and smuggling activities. This should include the objectives and locations of these exercises, the departments involved and the number of law enforcement officers participating.
3. Information on drills conducted by the Police in the past year to ensure the security of critical infrastructure, including the objectives, the number of participants, the departments, organisations, and groups involved, as well as the related expenditure.
4. In response to emerging threats, such as increasing cyber attacks, acts that endanger national security and various forms of terrorist activities, please provide information on any review or development of contingency plans by the Police in the past year.
5. To enhance the Police's management and enforcement capabilities for public events, please provide the current staff establishment designated for such duties.
6. Given the Government's plan to hold monthly events, including pyrotechnic and drone shows, in the coming year, please advise whether the Police will adjust the current staff establishment for managing public events and develop new guidelines and contingency plans for these occasions.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

1. In 2024-25, there will be a net decrease of 228 posts in the establishment under Programme (4) “Operations” (involving creation of 8 disciplined service posts reduction of 210 disciplined service posts and 26 civilian posts). Details on the number of posts to be reduced and the salaries involved are tabulated as follows:

Rank	Number of posts to be reduced	Police Pay Scale (PPS)/ Master Pay Scale (MPS)	Monthly salary for the rank in HK\$ (from 1 April 2023)
Police Constable	-210	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	-210		
Office Assistant	-2	MPS 1 – 6	14,735 – 20,165
Senior Typist	-1	MPS 11 – 15	27,405 – 34,060
Typist	-2	MPS 2 – 10	15,665 – 25,815
Cook	-21	MPS 5 – 8	18,965 – 22,895
Total (civilian staff)	-26		
Total	-236		

For operational effectiveness, it is inappropriate to disclose the details on the reduction of establishment in individual formations.

To continuously enhance its efficiency, the Police Force has developed comprehensive human resources and strategic plans that cover various aspects, including staff training and career development. Officers are encouraged to pursue self-advancement and strengthen their professional capacity so as to serve members of the public more effectively. The Force deploys resources flexibly in response to policing needs, ensuring that the community’s service demands are effectively met. In general, policing services will not be affected by the reduction in establishment.

2. To combat illegal immigration and smuggling, the Force has strengthened intelligence sharing and has been collaborating closely with local and Mainland law enforcement agencies. These efforts include intensifying land and sea patrols, especially at black spots for illegal activities in the border of both sides, thereby enabling the timely execution of coordinated anti-immigration and anti-smuggling operations.

In 2023, the Hong Kong Marine Police conducted a joint sea exercise with Mainland law enforcement agencies. The exercise, attended by a total of 87 officers, simulated illegal immigrants entering Hong Kong from the western boundary of Hong Kong’s territorial waters using a speedboat. Officers were required to accurately detect the navigation route and deploy enforcement launches to stop and search the suspicious speedboat. This exercise aimed to test and enhance the communication, coordination and response capabilities of commanders, Command Centres and responding officers from both administrations.

3. Over the past year, the Force has continued to address the latest trends in terrorist activities by collaborating with various government departments and organisations. These include the Fire Services Department, Customs and Excise Department, Correctional Services Department, Immigration Department, Civil Aviation Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Civil Aid Service, St. John Ambulance Brigade, Airport Authority, air passenger carriers, MTR Corporation Limited, and various transportation, security and venue management companies. A total of 17 cross-agency counter-terrorism (CT) exercises were conducted. These exercises, which simulated serial terrorist attacks, tested the operational and coordination capabilities of frontline personnel in response to terrorist incidents or unforeseen events. They have successfully strengthened the CT response capabilities and contingency planning of the involved departments and organisations, thereby enhancing their coordination and cooperation through the experiences gained. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the number of participants or the expenditure involved.
4. The Force will continue to optimise its CT strategies and operational plans, strategically deploy CT resources, and maintain close liaison with other law enforcement agencies, including those in the Mainland and overseas, for timely intelligence exchange and risk assessments.

Furthermore, to combat novel types of cyber attacks, the Force will enhance public-private partnerships, conduct regular cyber security exercises and assist the Government in enacting new legislation, thereby preventing illegal acts that endanger national security and advocate terrorism through the Internet.

In terms of public-private collaboration, the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB) has launched several initiatives. These include the establishment of the Cybercrime Policing Advisory Panel since December 2022, the hosting of the International Symposium on Cyber Policing in September 2023, and the establishment of the Cyber Security Action Task Force (CSATF) in February 2024. Tasked with facilitating the exchange of cyber intelligence and sharing professional knowledge, the CSATF aims to raise awareness and improve defense capabilities against cyber threats in the industry and the wider community, thereby safeguarding Hong Kong's cyber security and preventing the spread of terrorism online to ensure robust national security.

In March 2023, the CSTCB and the Government Computer Emergency Response Team Hong Kong jointly organised the 7th Inter-departmental Cyber Security Drill, with the participation of information technology officers from 68 government bureaux and departments. Preparations for the 8th Inter-departmental Cyber Security Drill, scheduled for April 2024, are currently underway. These drills are intended to strengthen cyber security awareness and defenses within the government and industry, with the goal of enabling Hong Kong to become a safer and more efficient smart city that provides effective defense against terrorism and ensures the protection of national security.

On the subject of enacting new legislation, the Force has been assisting the Law Reform Commission in exploring the proposal of introducing new statutory provisions to tackle five types of cybercrimes. It has also been assisting the Security Bureau in drafting

legislation to define the cyber security obligations of critical infrastructure operators, with the aim of introducing a bill to the Legislative Council within 2024. By enhancing the protection of local web-based and critical infrastructure information systems, these initiatives will help eliminate cyber security hazards posed by those who engage in illegal online activities or advocate terrorism through the Internet, thereby safeguarding national security, public safety, and public order.

5. In handling public order events (POEs), the Force will conduct a holistic risk assessment and consideration based on the purpose, nature and expected attendance of such events, as well as the strategies used and experience gained from similar past events, to formulate overall strategies and contingency plans. The Force will also deploy manpower flexibly (including mobilising officers from various frontline and supporting units) and implement crowd management measures in response to the specific circumstances and needs. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the staff establishment involved in managing POEs.

The Force will continue to review its manpower, equipment and deployment as appropriate to enhance its management and enforcement capabilities in handling POEs.

6. The Force remains committed to maintaining close liaison with relevant government departments and community stakeholders to exchange views and assess the situation in a timely manner. It will closely monitor the situation in various districts, including the people flow, traffic, and law and order issues, with a view to examining operational needs and deploying police manpower accordingly, thereby ensuring the smooth and safe conduct of all POEs.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB049

(Question Serial No. 0271)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Police attach great importance on animal welfare and have assigned a designated Animal Crime Police Team in each of the 22 police districts with crime investigation units to handle animal cruelty cases across the territory. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

1. the total number of reported cases of cruelty to animals received by the Force, the types of animals involved, and the respective numbers of prosecutions and convictions in such cases for each of the past 5 years;
2. the staff establishment and estimated expenditure in respect of the Animal Crime Police Teams for each of the past 5 years, whether the current staff establishment is adequate for coping with their daily work, and whether there are any plans to strengthen the staff establishment;
3. regarding the continued implementation of the Animal Watchers Programme, as mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25, the number and types of activities organised since the launch of the Programme, the number of participants and the expenditure involved, as well as whether the effectiveness of these activities has been evaluated; and
4. the number of police dogs trained and the expenditure involved for each of the past 5 years, as well as the expenditure earmarked this year for training police dogs.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Pui-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

1. The numbers of cases on cruelty to animals reported to the Police Force, persons arrested, prosecutions instituted and persons convicted under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance for the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of cases reported	60	70	88	54	74
Number of persons arrested	36	50	55	32	60
Number of prosecutions instituted	27	14	21	20	17 (as at third quarter)
Number of persons convicted	23	13	16	23	15 (as at third quarter)

The Force does not maintain other information requested in the question.

2. To more accurately represent the role of the specialised criminal investigation teams assigned to animal cruelty cases in various police districts, these groups have been officially named “Animal Crime Police Teams” effective from 28 February 2021. The establishment of an Animal Crime Police Team varies across different police districts. Generally, a team is comprised of 1 Inspector, 1 Sergeant, and 4 to 6 Police Constables. The Force will review the manpower deployment from time to time and make appropriate deployment to meet operational needs.

The expenditure of the Force for investigating such cases falls under the Programme of “Prevention and Detection of Crime”, and no specific breakdown is available.

3. To enlist public support and assistance in combating acts of cruelty to animals, the Force implemented the Animal Watchers Programme (AWP) in 2021, with a view to agglomerating the strengths of animal lovers at the community level and on social media platforms in the 4 directions of education, publicity, intelligence-gathering and investigation; raising public awareness on prevention of cruelty to animals; and encouraging the public to report in a timely manner and provide information that could help investigations. Through organising territory-wide large-scale events involving different communities and age groups, AWP aims to strengthen the awareness and care of the general public on the issue of cruelty to animals and animal welfare, as well as to disseminate the message of prevention of cruelty to animals effectively to the public.

In 2021, the Force organised several large-scale activities related to crime prevention, including an event titled “AWP Fight Poisoning Campaign”, a video competition named “AWP Plank Challenge”, and a public education event called “AWP Community Mobile Classroom”. In 2022, the Force launched a series of educational and promotional activities under the banner of “AWP x 25A”. These activities included the “AWP Colours in 25A” colouring and drawing contest, school promotions titled “Animal Care Corner”, and the “BYOP (Bring Your Own Pet) Treasure Hunt”. In 2023, AWP initiated the “Synergy for Great” initiative, collaborating with various organisations to

introduce the “Life-wide Animal Care College” educational programmes. This initiative featured the “Adventure King Summer Camp”, educational seminars, visits to the veterinary medical centre, and the “Hang-in-there Charity Challenge” in observance of World Animal Day.

The events organised from 2021 to 2023 saw the physical participation of over 125 000 people, with approximately 7.55 million online engagements (e.g. social media posts) recorded. The Force will continue its efforts to raise public awareness about preventing cruelty to animals through the AWP initiative. A multifaceted approach will be used to evaluate its effectiveness, using a variety of indicators such as the number of cases reported, the number of persons arrested and the level of public engagement. Currently, most animal cruelty cases are reported to the Force by members of the public who voluntarily provide information for investigations. This demonstrates that the AWP initiative has a significant impact on enhancing police-community cooperation and raising public awareness in the fight against animal cruelty.

The expenditure involved falls under the Programme “Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community”. No specific breakdown is available.

4. The average number of serving police dogs of the year for the past 5 years is as follows:

Year	Serving police dogs (average number of the year)
2019	133
2020	132
2021	137
2022	154
2023	152
2024 (as at February)	153

The expenditure of the Police Dog Unit (PDU) includes expenses on the daily operation of PDU bases, dog food, medication and dog training equipment, as well as salaries for dog handlers, supervising officers and civilian staff, and costs for equipment. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure on training police dogs.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB050

(Question Serial No. 0272)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The provision for 2024-25 is \$459.5 million (8.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24, mainly due to the increased provisions for salaries, departmental expenses and a net increase of 7 posts. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The details of the additional posts, including the respective post titles, ranks, duties, payroll costs, and whether they are permanent or supernumerary, as well as the nature of the work involved;
2. Of the 90 276 crimes reported in 2023, a total of 28 060 were detected (resulting in a detection rate of 31.3%). Please explain in detail the reasons of this relatively low detection rate; and
3. As mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25, the Police Force plans to strengthen its crime investigation capability by improving the existing criminal intelligence systems. Please provide details on the estimated expenditure and staff establishment required for enhancing these systems, as well as the expected completion date for the system upgrades.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Pui-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

1. In 2024-25, there will be a net increase of 7 permanent posts in the Police Force (comprising an increase of 28 disciplined posts and a decrease of 3 disciplined posts and 18 civilian posts) under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime" for the purpose of enhancing territory-wide anti-deception capability and discharging cyber security work in relation to the 15th National Games in 2025.

Details on the posts to be created are as follows:

Rank	Number of posts to be created	Police Pay Scale (PPS)	Monthly salary for the rank (HK\$) (from 1 April 2023)
Chief Inspector	1	PPS 44 – 49	100,200 – 123,905
Senior Inspector/ Inspector	4	PPS 24 – 43	50,500 – 96,600
Station Sergeant	3	PPS 24 – 33a	50,500 – 74,590
Sergeant	12	PPS 17 – 28	41,155 – 59,080
Police Constable	8	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	28		

Details on the posts to be reduced are as follows:

Rank	Number of posts to be reduced	Police Pay Scale (PPS)/ Master Pay Scale (MPS)/ Model Scale 1 Pay Scale (MOD)	Monthly salary for the rank (HK\$) (from 1 April 2023)
Senior Inspector/ Inspector	-1	PPS 24 – 43	50,500 – 96,600
Police Constable	-2	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	-3		
Total (civilian officers)	-18	MPS 1 – 24 MOD 3 – 13	14,735 – 52,410 15,690 – 19,175
Total	-21		

- In 2023, a total of 90 276 cases of crime were recorded in Hong Kong, representing an increase of 28.9% compared to 2022. The upsurge was mainly attributed to an increase in deception cases, and also, to the rise in traditional crimes following the resumption of social normalcy. The overall detection rate was 31.1%. Leaving deception cases aside, the detection rate was 46.2%.

There were 39 824 cases of deception in 2023, accounting for 44.1% of the total number of crimes. The proportion of deception cases relative to overall crimes has been increasing, rising from 15.4% in 2018 to 39.9% in 2022, and continued its upward trend in 2023.

The number of deception cases is on the increase worldwide. The public's extensive use of the Internet and social media for social networking, communication, online shopping, job hunting and investment has opened up new opportunities for scammers. Most deception cases fall under the category of technology crime, which often involve cross-territorial elements. Fraudsters can overcome geographical boundaries via the Internet, reach their victims, and instantly transfer crime proceeds overseas. By exploiting technological advancements, fraud syndicates constantly evolve their modus operandi, which poses challenges to anti-deception efforts. Consequently, deception

cases have maintained a relatively lower detection rate, ranging from 10.6% to 13.2% over the past 5 years.

In 2023, aside from deception, various types of theft and "naked chat" blackmail that fall under technology crimes, many traditional crimes (such as robbery, arson and burglary) saw a significant decrease compared to the figures in 2018 (i.e. before the "black-clad violence" and the epidemic). In fact, the figures even reached new lows not seen in years or on record, while the crime detection rate has relatively increased, even achieving the highest on record. This indicates that the overall law and order situation in Hong Kong is stable. Indeed, when compared to other international metropolises, the crime rate in Hong Kong has consistently remained at a very low level.

In 2024, the Force will continue to focus on fighting and preventing crimes, with an emphasis on combating deception cases. In addition to stepping up enforcement and enhancing prosecution efficiency, the Force will rigorously combat the use of stooge accounts by deception syndicates in committing crimes through applications for enhanced sentencing. Approaches such as interception of fraudulent payments and upstream scam intervention will be adopted to minimise victims' losses. Furthermore, the Force will continue to raise anti-deception awareness of the general public through online and offline publicity and actively seek to maintain close cooperation with stakeholders from various sectors, relevant government departments and other law enforcement agencies, including those in the Mainland and overseas.

3. To effectively prevent and detect crime, the Force periodically pursues the upgrading and enhancement of its relevant criminal intelligence computer systems. With a funding of \$698 million approved by the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council, the Force has developed and incrementally implemented a Financial Data Analytic Platform since 2023. This platform harnesses advanced technologies and big data analytics tools to strengthen the analytical capabilities of the financial intelligence system. The Force is also preparing for the development of a Centralised Digital Image Platform for the proper storage, processing, retrieval and sharing of multimedia files with intelligence or evidential value. In this regard, the Panel on Security of the Legislative Council will be consulted and funding approval will be sought from the FC in due course. The Force will continue to employ advanced technologies to enhance its capabilities in collecting and analysing criminal intelligence, and in combating organised and serious crime, technology crime and deception.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB051

(Question Serial No. 0273)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses
Programme: (4) Operations
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The provision for 2024-25 is \$772.0 million or 14.9% higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. The increase is mainly due to the increased provisions for salaries and departmental expenses, as well as an increased cash flow requirement for capital items, partly offset by a net decrease of 228 posts. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The reasons for the net decrease of 228 posts, the payroll costs involved, and whether the work of the Police will be adjusted due to the reduction of posts; if so, the details; if not, the reasons;
2. The details of the increased cash flow requirement for capital items;
3. The measures that the Police will take to step up efforts in combating the Mainland illegal immigrants, given that the majority of those arrested or intercepted had illegally entered the territory by sea, as well as the respective manpower and estimated expenditures involved;
4. The reasons for a decrease of 170 officers trained in internal security duties, from 1 020 in 2023 to 850 in 2024 as estimated; whether efforts to ensure public order and public safety during major security and public events will be affected; and
5. The details of the criminal acts that may threaten the internal security of Hong Kong, the operations to be conducted to suppress such criminal acts as mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25, as well as the respective manpower and estimated expenditures involved.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Pui-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

1. In 2024-25, there will be a net decrease of 228 posts in the establishment under Programme (4) "Operations" (involving creation of 8 disciplined service posts and reduction of 210 disciplined service posts and 26 civilian posts). Details on the number of posts to be reduced and the salaries involved are tabulated as follows:

Rank	Number of posts to be reduced	Police Pay Scale (PPS)/ Master Pay Scale (MPS)	Monthly salary for the rank in HK\$ (from 1 April 2023)
Police Constable	-210	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	-210		
Office Assistant	-2	MPS 1 – 6	14,735 – 20,165
Senior Typist	-1	MPS 11 – 15	27,405 – 34,060
Typist	-2	MPS 2 – 10	15,665 – 25,815
Cook	-21	MPS 5 – 8	18,965 – 22,895
Total (civilian staff)	-26		
Total	-236		

In order to maintain the sustainability of our public finances, the Government has strictly controlled the civil service establishment since 2021-22. The Government will continue to implement this initiative, and maintain the target of zero-growth in the civil service establishment in 2024-25. The Police Force has enhanced effectiveness and efficiency through re-prioritisation, internal redeployment and streamlining of work processes, so that various new policies and initiatives can be taken forward. Posts which no longer have operational needs would also be deleted after a review of establishments.

The Force makes flexible deployment to meet the policing needs. In fact, the Force has formulated comprehensive human resources and strategic plans for staff training, career development, among others, to continuously enhance its capability. Officers are encouraged to make self-advancement and strengthen their own professional capacity so as to serve members of the public more effectively. In general, policing services will not be affected by the establishment adjustments.

2. On capital items, the Force has taken into account the actual progress and requirements of the project items (including the replacement and procurement of plant, crafts, vehicles and equipment) when assessing the annual cash flow requirements, so as to maintain its service level.
3. To intercept illegal immigration activities, the Force has implemented stringent security measures and enforcement actions along the land and sea boundaries. These include enhanced inspections at gathering blackspots of illegal immigrants, high-profile land and sea patrols, and the set-up of roadblocks at strategic locations. Additionally, the Force maintains close collaboration and intelligence sharing with relevant local and Mainland law enforcement agencies, conducting regular joint operations to combat illegal immigration. For example, the Marine Police of Hong Kong and Mainland law enforcement agencies have strengthened their joint sea patrols. Furthermore, the Force has undertaken inter-departmental operations, codenamed “Champion” and “Powerplayer”, in collaboration with the Immigration Department and the Labour Department. These operations aim to address the issue of illegal immigrants, their unlawful employment and other illicit activities in Hong Kong.

In response to the trends of illegal immigration activities, the Force will timely deploy manpower from all frontline and criminal investigation units to conduct enforcement actions throughout the territory. No specific staff establishment or estimated expenditures will be involved.

4. To ensure public order and safety, the Force is committed to providing internal security training to the police officers concerned. As the training cycle does not align perfectly with the financial year, each year, 5 or 6 companies (comprising 170 officers each) will receive internal security training. According to the established training cycle, there is a total of 1 020 trainees across 6 companies in 2023, a total of 850 trainees across 5 companies in 2024, and it will return to a total of 1 020 trainees across 6 companies in 2025. The number of trainees has remained at a reasonable and stable level.
5. Hong Kong has emerged from social disorder and the pandemic, advancing from stability to prosperity. Nevertheless, a small number of local radicals continue to operate in an underground and clandestine manner, and external forces persist in disseminating seditious materials through various channels, aiming to instigate anti-government sentiments and threaten Hong Kong's internal security.

To combat crimes that endanger internal security, the Force actively collaborates with various law enforcement agencies and stakeholders. This partnership enhances sector responsiveness to related crimes through improved training, strengthened intelligence analysis and regular drills. The Force will maintain sufficient manpower to uphold internal security and to prevent and respond swiftly to relevant offences. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the estimated expenditures for such efforts.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB052

(Question Serial No. 0274)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses
Programme: Not specified
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The estimate of the amount required in 2024-25 for the salaries and expenses of the Hong Kong Police Force is \$27,812,933,000, representing an increase of \$2,340,115,000 over the revised estimate for 2023-24. Additionally, it is expected there will be a net decrease of 273 posts in the Force for 2024-25. In this connection, please provide the following details to this Committee:

1. The details of the posts to be created, including the total expenditure to be involved, as well as the details of the posts to be deleted and the total expenditure thus saved;
2. The total number, post titles, ranks, duties and payroll costs in respect of the current vacancies in the Force, as well as any measures and strategies that the Force intends to implement to strengthen its efforts on recruitment in the future; and
3. The Force has conducted the Police University Recruitment Express (PURE) at 11 local universities to facilitate students' entry into the Force and launched the PURE (Mainland) to recruit Hong Kong students studying in Mainland China. Please advise on the total number of students engaged, the number of applications received, and the number of students employed through these programmes since their inception, with a breakdown by local students and Hong Kong students studying in the Mainland. Please also indicate whether the effectiveness of these recruitment exercises has been reviewed; if so, the details; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon CHAN Pui-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

1. In 2024-25, there will be a net decrease of 273 posts in the Police Force, involving creation of 58 posts and reduction of 331 posts.

Details on the 58 posts to be created and the salaries involved are set out in the following table:

Rank	Number of posts to be created	Police Pay Scale (PPS)/ Master Pay Scale (MPS)	Monthly salary for the rank in HK\$ (from 1 April 2023)
Senior Superintendent	1	PPS 54 – 54b	150,265 – 159,130
Superintendent	2	PPS 50 – 53	128,510 – 144,440
Chief Inspector	3	PPS 44 – 49	100,200 – 123,905
Senior Inspector/Inspector	8	PPS 24 – 43	50,500 – 96,600
Station Sergeant	3	PPS 24 – 33a	50,500 – 74,590
Sergeant	17	PPS 17 – 28	41,155 – 59,080
Police Constable	18	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	52		
Supplies Assistant	1	MPS 1 – 10	14,735 – 25,815
Police Translator I	1	MPS 22 – 27	47,795 – 60,065
Police Translator II	1	MPS 10 – 21	25,815 – 45,640
Senior Traffic Warden	1	MPS 13 – 16	30,870 – 35,775
Traffic Warden	2	MPS 6 – 12	20,165 – 29,120
Total (civilian staff)	6		
Total	58		

Details on the 331 posts to be reduced and the salaries involved are set out in the following table:

Rank	Number of posts to be reduced	Police Pay Scale (PPS)/ Master Pay Scale (MPS)/ Model Scale 1 Pay Scale (MOD)	Monthly salary for the rank in HK\$ (from 1 April 2023)
Senior Inspector/Inspector	-2	PPS 24 – 43	50,500 – 96,600
Police Constable	-213	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	-215		
Calligraphist	-1	MPS 3 – 15	16,695 – 34,060
Office Assistant	-21	MPS 1 – 6	14,735 – 20,165
Supervisor of Typing Services	-1	MPS 17 – 24	37,585 – 52,410
Senior Typist	-3	MPS 11 – 15	27,405 – 34,060
Typist	-23	MPS 2 – 10	15,665 – 25,815
Artisan	-7	MPS 5 – 8	18,965 – 22,895
Cook	-21	MPS 5 – 8	18,965 – 22,895
Property Attendant	-10	MOD 3 – 13	15,690 – 19,175
Workman I	-9	MOD 3 – 13	15,690 – 19,175
Workman II	-20	MOD 0 – 8	14,730 – 17,355
Total (civilian staff)	-116		
Total	-331		

2. At present, there are approximately 6 000 vacancies for police officers in the Force. Details on the rank categories mainly involved are as follows:

Rank category	Police Pay Scale (PPS)/ Master Pay Scale (MPS)	Monthly salary for the rank in HK\$ (from 1 April 2023)
Inspectorate	PPS 24 – 49	50,500 – 123,905
Junior officer	PPS 4 – 33a	28,095 – 74,590

The Force has been adopting proactive recruitment strategies to attract high calibre candidates who have the competence to become a police officer, the affection for the Motherland and Hong Kong, and the passion to serve the public.

The Force regularly reviews its recruitment policy to ensure that the entry requirements are up-to-date while the Force’s competitiveness in the human resources market is maintained. With effect from 5 May 2023, the Force has adjusted the entry requirements. For the positions of police constable (including auxiliary police constable) and probationary inspector, the minimum height and weight requirements have been removed to align with other disciplined services. Applicants are also allowed to pass the visual acuity test with the use of spectacles or contact lenses, while the requirement for colour perception test remains unchanged. Moreover, for the position of police constable (including auxiliary police constable), applicants may choose to sit for a Recruit Police Constable Written Examination newly introduced by the Force.

Meanwhile, the Force has disseminated recruitment and publicity information through various media and social networking platforms, and has organised regular recruitment activities and projects, such as the Police Recruitment Experience and Assessment Day, Police Mentorship Programme, Police University Recruitment Express (PURE), Hong Kong Police University Recruitment Express (Mainland) (PURE (Mainland)), Diploma of Applied Education – Police Cadet Training, Auxiliary Undergraduate Scheme, Police Recruitment Buddies Scheme, Sportsmen’s Programme for Recruitment, Experience and Development, Auxiliary Police Recruitment Express, education and careers expo as well as publicity videos featuring “Recruitment Spokespersons”, etc.

The Force will adjust the approach of recruitment publicity in light of general social conditions such as the economic situation and demand in the labour market.

3. To facilitate university students’ entry into the Force, the Force has been conducting publicity work on university campuses. The Force has organised the PURE at 11 local universities since 2022, offering recruitment information and conducting selection process. As at 31 March 2024, a total of 594 local university students have applied for the position of probationary inspector, 44 students have applied for the position of police constable and 424 students have applied for the position of auxiliary police constable through the PURE. Among them, 701 applicants are at various stages of the recruitment process, and 50 applicants have joined the Force as probationary inspectors, police constables or auxiliary police constables.

The Force has launched the PURE (Mainland) since November 2022 in view of the rising number of Hong Kong students studying in the Mainland in recent years, which

aims to recruit them and facilitate early commencement of foundation training upon their graduation and return to Hong Kong. The Force sent delegations to Shanghai, Wuhan, Guangdong, Fujian, Chengdu and Beijing to deliver recruitment talks, provide recruitment related information, conduct on-site selection processes and organise a series of online and offline publicity campaigns for Hong Kong students studying in universities thereat. A total of 2 898 Hong Kong students studying in the Mainland participated in the activities, amongst which 852 students applied and participated in the on-site selection processes, and 852 applications (266 for the position of probationary inspector, 551 for the position of police constable and 35 for the position of auxiliary police constable) were received. As at 31 March 2024, 527 applicants are at various stages of the recruitment process, and 47 applicants have joined the Force as police constables or auxiliary police constables.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB053

(Question Serial No. 3089)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Force will continue to adopt a multi-agency approach to address the problems of juvenile delinquency and youth involvement in crime and drugs. Please advise this Committee of the following:

Please provide the actual number of collaborations among various types of organisations in combating juvenile delinquency, and indicate whether the effectiveness of the current multi-agency approach has been evaluated; if so, the details; if not, the reason(s); and

Regarding the youth crime situation, please detail the types of crimes involved, drug-related cases, and the number of convictions, disaggregated by age group (under 13, 13-15, 16-18, and 19-21) for the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Pui-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

According to the categorisation by the Police Force, the number of youths arrested for committing criminal offences over the past 3 years, broken down by type of crime, is tabulated as follows (the number of youths arrested are divided into the age groups of 10-15 and 16-20 for statistical purposes):

Juveniles (aged 10-15)	2021	2022	2023
Wounding and serious assault	174	197	196
Shop theft	99	68	106
Indecent assault	65	68	99
Criminal damage	156	126	93
Miscellaneous thefts	84	91	92
Deception	12	9	39
Unlawful society offences	38	71	37
Arson	32	18	25
Disorderly conduct/fighting in a public place	18	28	24
Serious drug offences	89	43	18
Offence against public order	61	26	13
Robbery	28	4	13
Possession of offensive weapon	20	13	12
Others	238	223	268
Total number of juveniles arrested	1 114	985	1 035

Young persons (aged 16-20)	2021	2022	2023
Deception	155	331	550
Wounding and serious assault	198	190	233
Serious drug offences	341	255	160
Criminal damage	179	152	125
Miscellaneous thefts	136	80	123
Shop theft	108	73	90
Indecent assault	56	63	70
Disorderly conduct/fighting in a public place	51	49	63
Offence against public order	59	22	45
Unlawful society offences	48	55	32
Robbery	33	15	26
Possession of offensive weapon	42	20	20
Arson	5	10	11
Others	496	474	458
Total number of young persons arrested	1 907	1 789	2 006

In the past 10 years, the figures of youths arrested for committing criminal offences fluctuated, and the figure of 2023 represents a decrease of 11.7% from the average figure of the past 10 years.

The Force has consistently focused on juvenile crime by dedicating significant resources to deter youth from engaging in illegal activities. Initiatives include establishing the “Leadership Institute on Narcotics” and the Junior Police Call. Moreover, the Force has been working closely with the Education Bureau and the education sector to step up the crime prevention publicity and education targeting young students. Since February last year, the Force has partnered with the Education Bureau to routinely develop teaching materials and offer crime prevention training for primary and secondary school teachers in Hong Kong. In this vein, the Force has produced the “Youth Crime Prevention Booklet” series for 2 consecutive years to aid educators and parents in crime prevention education. In January 2024, the Force contributed to the Po Leung Kuk Teacher Development Day by sharing strategies to address youth crime and the latest crime prevention insights with 1 000 primary school principals and teachers. Additionally, the Force is scheduled to participate in the teacher development days of 5 secondary schools between March and April. Furthermore, the Force visited the Education University of Hong Kong in January 2024 to engage with 220 prospective teachers, who are pursuing diplomas or master’s degrees in education, on subjects including digital literacy, anti-drug initiatives and child protection. This aims to shed light on the trends in youth crime for more effective crime prevention education. In addition, the Force will organise the anti-cannabis month again in April and launch an all-new drama titled “KOL Interactive Anti-Drug Drama” to convey the anti-drug messages to campuses and the community in a lively manner.

For drug cases, the number of both juveniles and young persons arrested in connection with serious drug offences, mainly involving drug trafficking and possession of dangerous drugs, has shown a downward trend in the past 2 years. In 2023, specifically, the number of young students arrested in connection with serious drug cases dropped by nearly 50% to 48, which is attributed to the Force’s increasing collaboration with schools, parents, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders in launching anti-drug publicity and education for students. The number of arrested non-students dropped by 36%.

The Force does not maintain a breakdown of other figures related to arrested youths as requested in the question.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB054

(Question Serial No. 3090)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Police Force will review anti-crime publicity programmes with a view to identifying themes that address specific crime problems for Force-wide implementation. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

1. the staff establishment and estimated expenditure for anti-crime publicity programmes for each of the past 3 years; additionally, provide details regarding the resources allocated for such work in the current year; and
2. the specific criminal behaviours targeted by the programmes in addressing specific crime problems; and whether there is a timeline for the Police to initiate a review and implement the programmes this year; if so, the details; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon CHAN Pui-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

1-2. The Publicity Sub-Committee of the Fight Crime Committee (FCC) annually reviews the results of the previous year's publicity programmes at the beginning of each financial year. It then determines the themes for the upcoming year, taking into account crime statistics, trends and matters of public concern. The themes are subject to FCC's endorsement following discussion and are subsequently implemented by the Police Force. The Force organises anti-crime publicity campaigns through various channels, including large-scale territory-wide activities, district talks, promotional videos and events co-organised with different stakeholders. Furthermore, the Publicity Sub-Committee also co-ordinates promotional activities conducted by the District FCCs, the Junior Police Call and the Senior Police Call.

In 2023-24, the Publicity Sub-Committee devised 4 themes for the fight crime publicity campaigns, namely, "Beware of Deception", "Let's Stand Firm. Knock Drugs Out!", "Enhance Law-Abiding Awareness Among Young People" and "Protect Children from Physical and Sexual Abuse." For 2024-25, the themes are "Beware of Deception"

“Let’s Stand Firm. Knock Drugs Out!”, “Enhance Law-Abiding Awareness Among Young People” and “Beware of Burglary and Theft.”

Since the anti-crime publicity programmes are implemented by various formations at the headquarters, regional and district levels, the Force does not maintain a detailed breakdown of staff establishment and the estimated expenditure for these initiatives.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB055

(Question Serial No. 3191)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Police Force will strengthen its response in tackling deceptions and frauds through the e-Crime Processing and Analysis Hub (e-Hub) and Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC). Please advise this Committee of:

1. The total number of deception and fraud cases reported to the Police last year, the types of deceptions and frauds, the total amount of money involved, and, among such cases, the respective numbers of prosecutions and convictions; and
2. The staff establishment and the expenditure involved in respect of the e-Hub and ADCC.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Pui-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 44)

Reply:

1. In 2023, the number of deceptions and frauds reported to the Police Force, the amount of losses, the detection rate and the number of persons arrested are tabulated as follows:

Number of cases	39 824
Amount involved (HK\$)	\$9.18 billion
Detection rate	11.9%
Number of persons arrested	7 043

The common types of deception and fraud reported to the Force as well as the amount involved in 2023 are tabulated as follows:

	Number of cases	Amount of losses (HK\$ million)
Online Deception	27 314	5,345.9
Common types of online scam		
E-Shopping Fraud	8 950	190.5
Online Investment Fraud	5 105	3,267.4
Phishing Scam	4 322	102.4
Online Employment Fraud	3 518	760.2
Social Media Deception	3 372	745.4
Email Scam	208	163.6
Telephone Deception	3 213	1,102.8
Guess Who	2 237	188.7
Pretend Officials	969	913.8
Detained Son	7	0.3

The Force does not maintain the statistics on the number of related prosecutions or convictions.

- In 2023-24, the staff establishment of the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre expanded from 49 in the previous financial year, with 32 being permanent establishment and 17 seconded from different Force formations, to 90. The number of permanent establishment increased by 5 to 37, and the remainder were filled by 53 officers on secondment from different Force formations or Post-retirement Service Contracts. Meanwhile, the establishment of the e-Crime Processing and Analysis Hub will expand from 26 since its inception in September 2022 to 28. Of these, 1 is a permanent post and the remainder are filled by officers on secondment from different Force formations.

The Force will periodically review the manpower and resources allocated to various formations and adjust the establishment in light of the latest crime trends and policing needs.

The relevant expenditures form part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditures involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB056

(Question Serial No. 2328)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Under the Brief Description, it is mentioned that the Police will organise anti-crime publicity programmes to address specific crime problems, including “Social Media Deception”, “E-shopping Fraud”, “Naked Chat Blackmail”, “Email Scam”, “Online Employment Fraud”, “Online Investment Fraud”, “Telephone Deception” (including Pretend Officials Telephone Deception), etc. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

1. in tabular form, the number of each type of frauds reported, the age range of the victims, their educational backgrounds and the amount of losses for the past 3 years;
2. the detection rate of online deception cases involving collaboration with overseas and Mainland criminal investigation agencies targeting cross-boundary criminal activities for the past 3 years;
3. the staff establishment and expenditure to be involved for anti-deception publicity in the coming year; and
4. specific plans and key performance indicators (KPIs) formulated to combat such crimes.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-yan, Joephy (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

1. The common types of deception and fraud reported to the Police Force as well as the amount involved for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	Number of cases			Amount of losses (HK\$ million)		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Online Deception	13 859	19 599	27 314	2,965.8	3,073.8	5,345.9
Common types of online scam						
E-shopping Fraud	6 120	8 735	8 950	71.5	74.1	190.5
Online Investment Fraud	980	1 884	5 105	472.0	926.5	3,267.4
Phishing Scam (Note)			4 322			102.4
Online Employment Fraud	1 063	2 884	3 518	85.3	459.1	760.2
Social Media Deception	3 638	3 605	3 372	669.4	779.0	745.4
Email Scam	549	391	208	1,538.8	751.1	163.6
Telephone Deception	1 140	2 831	3 213	811.1	1,076.5	1,102.8
Guess Who	497	1 540	2 237	27.5	114.1	188.7
Pretend Officials	641	1 290	969	783.5	962.3	913.8
Detained Son	2	1	7	0.1	0.07	0.3

(Note) Figures related to phishing scam have been maintained by the Force since 2023.

The age range of the victims involved in telephone deception for each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Age of victims	12 to 96	14 to 100	15 to 107

The Force does not maintain breakdown statistics on the other details of the victims.

2. The Force spares no effort in combating cross-boundary criminal activities and maintains close liaison and collaboration with law enforcement agencies in the Mainland and overseas. This collaboration spans various areas, including the exchange of intelligence and experiences, professional training and joint operations. Additionally, the Force closely monitors global crime trends and draws on the experiences of both the Mainland and abroad in fighting crime to introduce suitable initiatives for Hong Kong. A recent example is the launch of the Anti-Deception Alliance last November.

On the enforcement front, the Force has conducted intelligence-led joint operations with law enforcement agencies worldwide to combat various types of crimes. In targeting online deception cases, the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB) and the Mainland public security authorities initiated a joint arrest operation, codenamed “Mengshi”, in June 2023. This operation neutralised two cross-boundary fraud syndicates and led to 19 arrests tied to at least 149 fraudulent cases involving more than \$60 million. In July, the CSTCB and the Mainland public security authorities executed another joint arrest operation, codenamed “Zhanzhen”, which disrupted a cross-border phishing fraud syndicate, culminating in 14 arrests. The Force does not maintain statistics on the detection rate of the cases concerned.

3. The expenditure incurred on anti-scam publicity and education forms part of the total expenditure under Programme 2 “Prevention and Detection of Crime”. The Force does not maintain the breakdown of the expenditure involved.

4. Deception syndicates utilise a multitude of stooge accounts to collect fraudulent payments and launder money. Therefore, targeting stooge accounts is a vital strategy in dismantling the fraud industry chain. In 2023, the Force arrested a total of 9 239 persons for involvement in various types of deception and money laundering offences, representing an increase of over 75% compared to 2022. Among these, about 6 500 were stooge account holders. The Force has reached a consensus with the Department of Justice to enhance evidence gathering and prosecution procedures for relatively simple and straightforward money laundering cases involving stooge accounts and to expedite prosecution. Moreover, the Force will continue to apply to the court for enhanced sentencing and has, since 2023, achieved a 20% increase in the sentences of 4 stooge account holders, leading to imprisonment terms ranging from 26 to 38 months.

In addition to stepping up enforcement and enhancing prosecution efficiency, the Force will rigorously combat the use of stooge accounts by deception syndicates in committing crimes through applications for enhanced sentencing. Approaches such as interception of fraudulent payments and upstream scam intervention will be adopted to minimise victims' losses. Furthermore, the Force will continue to raise anti-deception awareness of members of the public through online and offline publicity and actively seek to maintain close cooperation with stakeholders from various sectors, relevant government departments and other law enforcement agencies, including those in the Mainland and overseas, so as to create synergy in combating deception cases.

The Force has no plans to formulate KPIs for specific types of deceptions.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**SB057****(Question Serial No. 3243)**Head: (122) Hong Kong Police ForceSubhead (No. & title): ()Programme: (3) Road SafetyControlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

1. Please provide the number of fixed penalty tickets (FPTs) for illegal parking issued by the Police Force under the Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contraventions) Ordinance (Cap. 237), broken down by month, for the past year.

2. Please provide the total amounts of fixed penalties paid by members of the public for illegal parking over the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

1.

Number of FPTs for illegal parking issued by the Police Force in 2023						
Month	January	February	March	April	May	June
Number	263 730	264 478	277 353	252 369	257 314	246 097
Month	July	August	September	October	November	December
Number	253 601	256 749	223 754	236 166	240 580	240 828
Total	3 013 019					

2.

Number of FPTs for illegal parking issued by the Force from 2021 to 2023			
Year	2021	2022	2023
Number of FPTs issued for illegal parking	3 302 160	3 363 471	3 013 019
Amount of fixed penalty received (\$ million)	\$1,057	\$1,076	\$964

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB058

(Question Serial No. 3245)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: Not specified
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

1. Please provide the number of reports received by the National Security Department each year since the enactment of the National Security Law (NSL).
2. Further to the above, please list the number of reports that were substantiated after further investigation, as well as the number of persons arrested each year.
3. Please provide the total number of persons arrested by the Police Force on suspicion of engaging in acts and activities that endanger national security, with a yearly breakdown since the NSL came into effect.
4. Further to the above, please provide the number of arrestees who have been convicted by court as of February 2024.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

The National Security Department (NSD) of the Police Force is a department established under Article 16 of the National Security Law (NSL) for safeguarding national security; its duties form part of the work in safeguarding national security and do not fall under Head 122.

The NSD of the Police Force launched the NSD Reporting Hotline on 5 November 2020. As at 8 March 2024, the Hotline has received more than 700 000 pieces of information in relation to national security.

Since the implementation of the NSL, as at 8 March 2024, a total of 291 persons (218 males and 73 females) aged 15 to 90 were arrested by the Police Force on suspicion of engaging in acts and activities endangering national security. Of these cases, over 170 persons and 5 companies were charged, of whom 112 persons have either been convicted or are awaiting sentencing.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**SB059****(Question Serial No. 3246)**Head: (122) Hong Kong Police ForceSubhead (No. & title): ()Programme: (3) Road SafetyControlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

1. Please provide the number of illegal parking cases handled with tow trucks by the Police Force, with breakdown by Police Region, for the past 3 years.
2. Further to the above, please itemise the expenditures involved.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)Reply:

1. The table below lists the number of cases in which illegally parked vehicles were towed by the Police Force, with breakdown by Police Region, for the past 3 years:

Police Region	Number of cases in which illegally parked vehicles were towed away		
	2021	2022	2023
Hong Kong Island	702	643	641
Kowloon East	599	329	185
Kowloon West	921	1 395	1 495
New Territories South	572	390	269
New Territories North	203	230	222
Total	2 997	2 987	2 812

2. The Force does not maintain statistics on the expenditure involved in towing away illegally parked vehicles.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**SB060****(Question Serial No. 3247)**

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

1. Please provide a list, categorised by type, of the number of online deception cases reported in each of the past 5 years.
2. Please provide a list, categorised by type, of the number of telephone deception cases reported in each of the past 5 years.
3. Please advise how the Police Force will combat online and telephone deception in the future.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

1. The number of cases of online deception, broken down by common types of online scam, reported to the Police Force for each of the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Online Deception	5 157	10 716	13 859	19 599	27 314
Common types of online scam					
E-shopping Fraud	2 194	6 678	6 120	8 735	8 950
Online Investment Fraud	167	544	980	1 884	5 105
Phishing Scam (Note)					4 322
Online Employment Fraud	66	236	1 063	2 884	3 518
Social Media Deception	1 678	1 988	3 638	3 605	3 372
Email Scam	816	767	549	391	208

(Note) Figures related to phishing scam have been maintained by the Force since January 2023.

2. The number of cases of telephone deception, broken down by common types of scam, reported to the Force for each of the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Telephone Deception	648	1 193	1 140	2 831	3 213
Guess Who	418	509	497	1 540	2 237
Pretend Officials	228	683	641	1 290	969
Detained Son	2	1	2	1	7

3. “Enhancing cyber security and fighting technology crime” remains one of the Commissioner’s Operational Priorities (COP) in 2024 and “combating quick cash crime” of the COP 2023 has been amended to “combating deception and quick cash crime”. The Force has been taking proactive measures on all fronts to combat deception and technology crimes. The Commercial Crime Bureau (CCB) and its Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC), the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB), the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau and the crime investigation units of various Police Regions and Districts are all dedicated to cracking down on scams and technology-related crimes.

In collaboration with stakeholders, the Force is committed to leveraging technology in the fight against deception. The Force established a dedicated working group with the Office of the Communications Authority and mobile network operators, and since then, several initiatives have been implemented. Apart from blocking spoofed calls originating from outside local regions with the prefix “+852”, and sending text or voice alerts to users when they receive such calls, mobile network operators have blocked or filtered over 7 600 websites and nearly 3 200 telephone numbers associated with deception cases upon the Force’s request by January 2024, and have been on the technical front proactively identifying and blocking a significant volume of calls made using technical devices and suspending related services.

Last year, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the banking industry, the Force introduced various anti-deception measures. Notably, in November 2023, the Faster Payment System (FPS) Suspicious Proxy ID Alert was launched, connecting the FPS platform to the “Scameter” database. During online fund transfer via FPS, the matching function of the database can identify payees whose information is related to scam reports, and an alert message will appear on the confirmation page. By 31 January 2024, this mechanism had issued over 264 000 alerts, flagging high-risk transfers totaling nearly \$410 million. The Force will continue to step up publicity and implement such mechanism in other platforms.

In late November last year, the Force collaborated with 10 major banks in establishing the Anti-Deception Alliance (ADA), where bank representatives are deployed to work in the Police Headquarters to provide more direct and instant communication and assistance in intercepting fraudulent payments and issuing alerts. Since its official launch on 27 November 2023 until late January 2024, 95% of payment interception requests has been responded by banks within 2 hours, markedly improving efficiency. In respect of upstream scam intervention, the ADA has proactively prevented 162 persons from making further transfers to fraudsters by the end of January. For intercepting fraud proceeds, the ADCC continues to assist in minimising victims’ losses, intercepting over \$12.5 billion worth of fraud proceed since its inception until the end of last year.

The CSTCB launched a one-stop scam and pitfall search engine “Scameter” in September 2022 and the mobile application version “Scameter+” in February 2023. As at 31 January 2024, “Scameter+” has been downloaded more than 228 000 times, while the search engine has recorded over 2.3 million searches and issued approximately 400 000 alerts on frauds and cyber security risks. In February this year, automation elements were incorporated in “Scameter+”, enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich the database of the search engine, a public “reporting” mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application.

In addition to stepping up enforcement and enhancing prosecution efficiency, the Force will rigorously combat the use of stooge accounts by deception syndicates in committing crimes through applications for enhanced sentencing. Approaches such as interception of fraudulent payments and upstream scam intervention will be adopted to minimise victims’ losses. Furthermore, the Force will continue to raise anti-deception awareness of members of the public through online and offline publicity and actively seek to maintain close cooperation with stakeholders from various sectors, relevant government departments and other law enforcement agencies, including those in the Mainland and overseas, so as to create synergy in combating deception cases.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**SB061****(Question Serial No. 3260)**Head: (122) Hong Kong Police ForceSubhead (No. & title): ()Programme: (3) Road SafetyControlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

Fixed penalty tickets (FPTs) for illegal parking have recently been fully switched to electronic ticketing, thereby eliminating the issuance of handwritten tickets. In this connection, please advise on:

The increase in the annual total number of FPTs since the complete transition to electronic ticketing, compared to the period when all FPTs were issued by hand.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

Since March 2020, the Police Force has launched the e-Ticketing Scheme in phases across all police districts in the territory. Frontline enforcement officers have been able to access and input data on illegally parked vehicles via their mobile devices and instantly print out fixed penalty tickets (FPTs). This innovation aims to reduce human error in issuing handwritten FPTs and enhance overall enforcement accuracy. In the two years prior to the launch of the e-Ticketing Scheme, 2018 and 2019, the Force issued 2 026 513 and 1 424 744 FPTs respectively. The figures for FPTs issued by the Force for illegal parking over the past 4 years, following the introduction of the e-Ticketing Scheme, are listed in the table below:

Number of FPTs issued for illegal parking							
2020		2021		2022		2023	
Total	Electronic	Total	Electronic	Total	Electronic	Total	Electronic
2 707 869	1 068 795 (39.5%)	3 302 160	2 366 658 (71.7%)	3 363 471	3 075 398 (91.4%)	3 013 019	2 955 229 (98.1%)

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB062

(Question Serial No. 0378)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The estimated expenditure for the above Programme for 2024-25 is 8.8% higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. Under “Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25”, the Government has noted that the Police will “maintain close liaison with counterparts in the Mainland, Macao and overseas jurisdictions in combatting cross-boundary and transnational crime and exchange of intelligence, skills and experience”. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. Given the frequent cross-boundary population flows post-pandemic, has the Police studied the evolving trends in cross-boundary and transnational crime, including but not limited to deception and drug trafficking? Please provide details on the manpower and expenditure allocated to these initiatives over the past year;
2. the manpower and resources that will be allocated to study and combat cross-boundary and transnational crime in the coming year, and whether there will be a particular focus on the types of crime that are becoming more prevalent in Hong Kong, such as deception, with a specific emphasis on cyber deception; and
3. whether the Police have adopted and implemented skills and experiences from the Mainland, Macao and overseas jurisdictions in combating cross-boundary and transnational crime, especially deception. If so, please provide details and the estimated manpower and expenditure involved; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

- 1-3. The Police Force spares no effort in combating cross-boundary criminal activities and maintains close liaison and collaboration with law enforcement agencies in the Mainland and overseas. This collaboration spans various areas, including the exchange of intelligence and experiences, professional training and joint operations. Additionally, the Force closely monitors global crime trends and draws on the experiences of both the Mainland and abroad in fighting crime to develop and implement measures suitable for

Hong Kong. A recent example is the launch of the Anti-Deception Alliance last November.

On the enforcement front, the Force has conducted intelligence-led joint operations with law enforcement agencies worldwide to combat various types of crimes. To combat triads and organised crime, authorities from Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao mounted operation “THUNDERBOLT 2023” from June to September 2023, resulting in the arrest of 6 400 persons in Hong Kong. In targeting online deception cases, the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB) and Mainland public security authorities initiated a joint arrest operation, codenamed “Mengshi”, in June 2023. This operation neutralised two cross-boundary fraud syndicates and led to 19 arrests tied to at least 149 fraudulent cases involving more than \$60 million. In July, the CSTCB and the Mainland public security authorities executed another joint arrest operation, codenamed “Zhanzhen”, which disrupted a cross-border phishing fraud syndicate, culminating in 14 arrests. To address cross-boundary drug trafficking, the Narcotics Bureau conducted 8 joint operations with law enforcement agencies in the Mainland and overseas last year, netting a total of 110 arrests. These operations resulted in the seizure of 2.4 tonnes of cocaine, approximately 1.1 tonnes of “Ice” and around 14 kilograms of heroin, with a total market value of about \$5 billion.

In efforts to minimise the losses of fraud victims, the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC) of the Commercial Crime Bureau has developed collaborations with Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies to enhance its capability in intercepting crime proceeds. In October 2019, it established the International Stop-Payment Mechanism with the Financial Crimes Unit of INTERPOL. This mechanism allows most member states to make mutual stop-payment requests, thereby enabling the Force to combat cross-border deception more effectively. As of December 2023, the ADCC has successfully intercepted more than \$12.5 billion in 4 721 deception cases where payments had already been made to local and overseas banks.

On tackling money laundering, the Joint Financial Intelligence Unit (JFIU) of the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau manages the suspicious transaction reporting regime for Hong Kong. Its role is to receive, analyse and maintain suspicious transaction reports, and to disseminate them to the appropriate investigation units. The JFIU also co-ordinates and communicates with JFIU stakeholders such as policy bureaux, financial regulators and professional bodies as well as Mainland and overseas financial intelligence units on the formulation of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing policies and legislation, and also on intelligence exchange.

To foster international and public-private collaboration in policing, the Force organised the International Symposium on Cyber Policing in September 2023. The event was attended by over 200 individuals, including 110 senior law enforcement officers, members, experts and academics from the Mainland, Macao, INTERPOL and 35 overseas countries, along with approximately 100 local working partners of the Force. During the symposium, 18 distinguished scholars from renowned universities and experts from the cyber technology industry, specialising in digital finance, communications technology, and cybersecurity, were invited to deliver keynote speeches and lead panel discussions for in-depth exploration into issues related to cyber

policing, with an aim to better address the evolving trends of cybercrime in the context of globalisation.

The Force will continue to proactively exchange intelligence and hold working meetings with other law enforcement agencies, including those from the Mainland and abroad, to keep officers abreast of the latest crime trends and investigative techniques. This effort extends to a variety of crimes, notably online fraud, and is intended to strengthen international cooperation. To foster intelligence exchange with INTERPOL and law enforcement agencies of other countries for combating cross-border crimes, 1 Superintendent has been seconded to INTERPOL General Secretariat in Lyon, France, and 1 Superintendent, along with 1 Chief Inspector, to INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation in Singapore. Last year, following a directive from the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau worked with Singaporean counterparts and INTERPOL to lead a study on online scams and money laundering. This collaboration aims to enhance the exchange of intelligence and knowledge.

The expenditure for the above initiatives forms part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". The Force does not maintain the breakdown of the expenditure involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB063

(Question Serial No. 0978)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: Not specified
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding efforts to combat absconding, please advise on:

- (a) the numbers of persons arrested, convicted and currently wanted for absconding since the National Security Law (NSL) took effect, with a breakdown by month; and
- (b) the most severe sentence handed down to those convicted of absconding since the enactment of the NSL, and the maximum and minimum penalties applicable.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

- (a) & (b) The National Security Department of the Police Force is a department established under Article 16 of the National Security Law for safeguarding national security; its duties form part of the work in safeguarding national security and do not fall under Head 122.

As at December 2023, of the 10 279 persons who were arrested in connection with the black-clad riots in 2019, 35 were wanted for failing to appear before the court and 26 did not report back to the Force while on Police bail pending further investigation. The Force does not maintain other information requested in the question.

Every individual must take responsibilities, including legal liabilities, for his or her action. The Force strongly condemns attempts to evade legal liabilities by jumping bail and absconding. In light of the actual circumstances, the Force will do their utmost to track down the whereabouts of the fugitive offenders through various means in accordance with the law and arrest them. The culprits will be held legally accountable for jumping bail and the investigation of the original cases will be carried on.

Section 9L of the Criminal Procedure Ordinance (Cap. 221) stipulates that a person admitted to bail who, without reasonable cause, fails to surrender to custody as shall have been appointed by a court, commits an offence which renders

the person liable on summary conviction to a fine of \$100,000 and to imprisonment for 6 months, and on conviction upon indictment to a fine of any amount and to imprisonment for 12 months.

In addition, the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance empowers the Secretary for Security to specify by gazette an individual who has absconded, and, depending on the situation and subject to certain conditions being fulfilled, the applicable measures to be taken. These include prohibiting the provision of funds to, or dealing with funds of, an absconder; suspending an absconder's qualification to practise, or the permission or registration required for operating businesses or employment; temporarily removing an absconder from holding the office of the director of a company; and cancelling the absconder's HKSAR passport.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB064

(Question Serial No. 3128)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the illegal trans-boundary operations by Mainland oyster farmers at Deep Bay, please advise on:

- (a) the manpower currently deployed by the Government to patrol in the waters around Urmston Road, the numbers of patrols conducted and the division of work; and
- (b) the numbers of enforcement actions against illegal activities of Mainland oyster farmers and their effectiveness over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24), as well as the penalties and fines imposed.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)

Reply:

- (a) The Deep Bay Sub-unit of Marine West Division of the Police Force is responsible for regular patrol and law enforcement in the waters at Deep Bay. The sub-unit currently has an establishment of 61 police officers, comprising 1 Inspector, 3 Station Sergeants, 16 Sergeants and 41 Police Constables, who are deployed to the Tsim Bei Tsui Marine Police Post, 2 Police barges and their respective patrol craft.

The numbers of “Anti-illegal Immigrant Operation” carried out by the Deep Bay Sub-unit and various Marine Police units in the waters at Deep Bay in 2021, 2022, 2023 and the first 2 months of 2024 are as follows:

Year	Number of operations
2021	468
2022	322
2023	825
2024 (as at 29 February 2024)	97

- (b) The numbers of Mainland illegal immigrants arrested by the Deep Bay Sub-unit and various Marine Police units in the waters at Deep Bay in 2021, 2022, 2023 and the first 2 months of 2024 are as follows:

Year	Number of persons arrested	Supplementary notes
2021	34	All illegal immigrants have been referred to the Immigration Department for action. No refusal notice (ID122) was issued to Mainland oyster farmers who were suspected of breaching the requirements.
2022	29	
2023	36	
2024 (as at 29 February 2024)	4	

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB065

(Question Serial No. 1387)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): (000) General Departmental Expenses

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community
(2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
(4) Operations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Since mid-2023, there was a steep increase in the number of young people interested in joining the Police Force. On one hand, this surge can be attributed to the diligent efforts of the Recruitment Division. On the other hand, it highlights the growing community recognition of the Force's contributions. It is stated in this Report that the estimated establishment will exceed 38 000 posts in 2024. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

Should the Force be in a position to significantly expand its establishment, will it consider creating additional professional formations or further delineating police districts to enhance service quality, and increasing the estimates for such an expansion?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

In 2023-24 and 2024-25, the Police Force's establishment ceilings are set at 38 265 and 37 992 respectively. In 2024-25, there will be a net decrease of 273 posts in the Force, involving creation of 58 posts and reduction of 331 posts. To continuously enhance its efficiency, the Force has developed comprehensive human resources and strategic plans that cover various aspects, including staff training and career development. Officers are encouraged to pursue self-advancement and strengthen their professional capacity, so as to serve the public more effectively. The Force will deploy resources flexibly in response to policing needs, ensuring that the community's service demands are effectively met.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB066

(Question Serial No. 2114)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding technology crime, please advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) The number of technology crime cases reported in each of the past 3 years (from 2021-22 to 2023-24), with a breakdown by type;
- 2) The number of technology crime cases detected in each of the past 3 years (from 2021-22 to 2023-24), along with the initiatives taken by the Police to better protect the public and to strengthen its efforts in combating technology crime; and
- 3) Since it is noted under Matters Requiring Special Attention that the Police will enhance their capability in tackling technology crime and financial investigation, please advise on the initiatives to be undertaken to achieve these goals, and whether, based on the trends in technology crime, additional manpower and resources will be allocated as required.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

- 1) The number of common technology crime cases reported to the Police Force in each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

	Number of Cases		
	2021	2022	2023
Technology Crime	16 159	22 797	34 112
Online Deception	13 859	19 599	27 314
Common Types of Online Scam			
<i>Online Shopping Fraud</i>	6 120	8 735	8 950
<i>Online Investment Fraud</i>	980	1 884	5 105
<i>Phishing Scam (Note)</i>			4 322
<i>Online Employment Fraud</i>	1 063	2 884	3 518
<i>Social Media Deception</i>	3 638	3 605	3 372
<i>Email Scam</i>	549	391	208
Misuse of Computer	142	192	3 471
<i>Account Abuse</i>	123	168	3 434
<i>Hacking Activities</i>	18	24	37
<i>Distributed Denial-of-service Attacks</i>	1	0	0
Internet Blackmail	1 317	1 557	2 428
<i>Naked Chat</i>	1 159	1 402	2 117
<i>Other Internet Blackmail</i>	158	155	311

(Note): “Phishing scam” has been categorised within the technology crime statistics by the Force since January 2023.

- 2-3) The number of deception and technology crime cases is on the increase worldwide. The public’s extensive use of the Internet and social media for social networking, communication, online shopping, job hunting and investment has opened up new opportunities for scammers. Most deception cases fall under the category of technology crime, which often involve cross-territorial elements. Fraudsters can overcome geographical boundaries via the Internet, reach their victims, and instantly transfer crime proceeds overseas. Furthermore, fraud syndicates often operate from regions with weak rule of law, committing crimes remotely and complicating enforcement efforts. By exploiting technological advancements, these syndicates constantly evolve their modus operandi, which poses challenges to anti-deception efforts. Consequently, deception and technology crime cases have achieved a relatively lower detection rate, which ranged from 8.8% to 9.9% in the past 3 years.

The Force is committed to taking proactive measures to combat technology crime and money laundering activities, primarily through the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB) and the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau (FIIB).

“Enhancing cyber security and combating technology crime” is among Commissioner’s Operational Priorities in 2024. The Force will continue to enhance its capability in combating technology crimes and handling cyber security incidents, as well as stepping up collaboration, intelligence exchange and law enforcement with relevant stakeholders

and law enforcement agencies, such as the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Hong Kong Productivity Council. In addition, the Cybercrime Policing Advisory Panel (CPAP) of the CSTCB was set up in December 2022, comprising 12 panel members who are experts and leaders from the academia, the education sector, commercial chambers, the financial sector, the information technology sector, the telecommunications sector and various public entities. The CPAP assists the Force in formulating short, medium and long term strategic directions in order to strengthen the Force's digital policing capabilities in combating cybercrimes. As of December 2023, 4 meetings had been convened by the CPAP.

On another front, the CSTCB hosted the International Symposium on Cyber Policing in September 2023. The event was attended by over 200 individuals, including 110 senior law enforcement officers, members, experts and academics from the Mainland, Macao, INTERPOL and 35 overseas countries, along with approximately 100 local working partners of the Force. During the symposium, 18 distinguished scholars from renowned universities and experts from the cyber technology industry, specialising in digital finance, communications technology, and cybersecurity, were invited to deliver keynote speeches and lead panel discussions for in-depth exploration into issues related to cyber policing. The symposium not only provided a platform for international law enforcement and public and private organisations to exchange insights but also fostered international collaboration in policing to better address the evolving trends of cybercrime in the context of globalization. Additionally, the CSTCB has regularly conducted training programmes to bolster police officers' expertise in handling technology crime, with two courses accredited at Level 4 and one at Level 5 of the Qualifications Framework respectively.

On financial investigation, the Force has been strengthening its professional capability in financial intelligence analysis and financial investigations, including the founding of the Money Laundering Expert Cadre in October 2022, a volunteer secondary duty cadre with currently more than 50 officers to assist the frontline in investigating money laundering cases and to testify as expert witnesses in court hearings. With FIIB's Financial Data Analytic Platform, funded by a \$698 million allocation from the Legislative Council and incrementally implemented since 2023, the financial intelligence system's analytical capabilities have been significantly enhanced through advanced technologies and big data analytics tools. To combat money laundering, the Force will continue to enhance the knowledge and techniques of police officers and the industry stakeholders in financial investigation by consistently offering local and international courses, as well as refining the mechanism for collaborating with local financial institutions, international organisations and law enforcement agencies from the Mainland and abroad.

The Force will periodically review and the manpower and resources allocated to various formations and adjust the staff establishment in response to the latest crime trends.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB067

(Question Serial No. 2115)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (2), the Police Force will maintain a high standard of investigation and provide professional service in all cases of domestic violence and continue to adopt a multi-disciplinary approach with other stakeholders in tackling the problem. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) The number of cases involving domestic violence for each of the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24), categorised by police division, case category and victim type (e.g. children); and
- 2) Details on how the Police Force will continue to adopt a multi-disciplinary approach with other stakeholders to tackle the problem of domestic violence when handling such cases.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

- 1) The Police Force attaches great importance to offences of domestic violence. Police officers will handle and investigate such cases with empathy, professionalism, fairness and impartiality.

Domestic violence refers to any cases involving assault or a breach of the peace that occurs between persons having marital or intimate partner relationships. These relationships refer to married, separated or divorced couples, cohabitants or former cohabitants, and lovers or former lovers.

Domestic Conflict Reports can be classified as “Domestic Violence (Crime)” (including more serious criminal cases such as murder, wounding, rape, indecent assault, criminal intimidation, etc.); “Domestic Violence (Miscellaneous)” (cases including common assault and a breach of the peace); and “Domestic Incidents” (cases not involving a breach of the peace or crime elements such as disputes and nuisance).

The numbers of Domestic Conflict Reports received by the Force in the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Domestic Violence (Crime)	1 196	1 128	1 235
Domestic Violence (Miscellaneous)	470	437	470
Domestic Incidents	7 646	7 450	7 650
Total number of Domestic Conflict Reports	9 312	9 015	9 355

The numbers of cases involving Domestic Violence (Crime) categorised by gender of the victims in the past 3 years are set out below:

	2021	2022	2023
Male	278	287	315
Female	918	841	920

The Force does not maintain statistics on victim type.

The numbers of cases involving Domestic Violence (Crime) and Domestic Violence (Miscellaneous) categorised by police district in the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Domestic Violence (Crime)																							
Year	Hong Kong Island Region				Kowloon East Region				Kowloon West Region				New Territories North Region				New Territories South Region				Marine Region	Total	
	Eastern District	Wan Chai District	Central District	Western District	Wong Tai Sin District	Kwun Tong District	Tseung Kwan O District	Sau Mau Ping District	Mong Kok District	Sham Shui Po District	Yau Tsim District	Kowloon City District	Tai Po District	Tuen Mun District	Yuen Long District	Border District	Tsuen Wan District	Kwai Tsing District	Shatin District	Lantau District	Airport District		
2023	50	25	16	33	73	37	30	55	71	121	85	73	99	84	132	21	36	69	87	31	3	4	1 235
2022	45	19	18	27	56	39	46	74	51	98	68	64	101	65	131	22	40	79	63	19	0	3	1 128
2021	39	37	24	38	52	53	48	77	67	88	73	68	69	71	132	10	46	91	87	23	1	2	1 196

Domestic Violence (Miscellaneous)																							
Year	Hong Kong Island Region				Kowloon East Region				Kowloon West Region				New Territories North Region				New Territories South Region				Marine Region	Total	
	Eastern District	Wan Chai District	Central District	Western District	Wong Tai Sin District	Kwun Tong District	Tseung Kwan O District	Sau Mau Ping District	Mong Kok District	Sham Shui Po District	Yau Tsim District	Kowloon City District	Tai Po District	Tuen Mun District	Yuen Long District	Border District	Tsuen Wan District	Kwai Tsing District	Shatin District	Lantau District	Airport District		
2023	12	4	5	12	24	9	11	22	25	59	30	35	65	29	57	4	23	19	13	10	2	0	470
2022	7	5	0	8	20	17	7	25	27	52	35	40	39	26	47	3	24	16	26	11	1	1	437
2021	6	11	11	14	18	9	9	31	23	39	38	36	40	23	49	12	36	27	28	9	0	1	470

- 2) Domestic violence is not only a crime but also a social issue. Therefore, a collective effort is needed to handle domestic violence cases. The Force has been handling such cases through an inter-departmental and multi-disciplinary approach, with a view to achieving the dual objectives of protecting the personal safety of the victims and their families as well as bringing the offenders to justice.

A referral mechanism has been established between the Force and the Social Welfare Department (SWD) since 2003 through which the Force, in general, having obtained the consent from victims of domestic violence cases, refers cases to the SWD for follow-up service. Non-consensual referrals are also made if an individual case is assessed as high-risk and a Superintendent of Police, after personally reviewing the case, decides that a referral is necessary to mitigate the risk of further deterioration. To strengthen communication between frontline police officers and social workers during the case referral process, the SWD will acknowledge receipt on receiving a police referral and inform the Force of the contact details of the responsible social worker. They will also inform whether the victims have accepted, among others, the follow-up service. Moreover, to facilitate the Force's work in seeking urgent professional advice and social work support for handling urgent and high-risk cases, a 24-hour Direct Referral Line has been set up between the SWD and the Force since October 2006. If needed, social workers will offer immediate professional advice and/or perform outreaching duties to assist the Force in handling emergencies.

The Force will continue to work closely with relevant government departments, non-governmental organisations and stakeholders from various professions. Efforts include organising seminars and workshops on preventing domestic violence, optimising policies and procedures related to handling of domestic violence cases and enhancing communication and collaboration among all parties.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB068

(Question Serial No. 0122)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Hong Kong Police Force launched the “e-154 App” in June 2021 and allocated tablet computers, smartphones and portable printers to all police districts. This initiative aims to save time in taking statements and to enhance work efficiency and effectiveness among officers. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- (1) the number of statements taken via the “e-154 App” in each of the past 3 years;
- (2) the number of tablet computers, smartphones and portable printers allocated in each of the past 3 years, categorised by police district; and
- (3) the expenditure or revised estimates of expenditure related to the “e-154 App” in each of the past 3 financial years.

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

- (1) The number of statements taken by the Police Force via the “e-154 App” in each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

	From June to December 2021	2022	2023
Number of statements taken via the “e-154 App” (approximate)	260	5 500	37 200

- (2) The number of tablet computers, smartphones and portable printers allocated within the Force in each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

	Quantity of equipment allocated (approximate)		
	2021	2022	2023
Tablet computers	760	1 050	320
Smartphones	300	500	180
Portable printers	230	270	360

The Force does not maintain a breakdown on the quantity of electronic equipment allocated by police district.

- (3) The recurrent expenditure involved for the system of the “e-154 App” in each of the past 3 financial years is tabulated as follows:

	2021-22 (Actual expenditure)	2022-23 (Actual expenditure)	2023-24 (Revised estimate)
Recurrent expenditure involved for the system of the “e-154 App” (HK\$) (Approx.)	1.6 million	2.7 million	3.3 million

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB069

(Question Serial No. 0127)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Hong Kong Police Force has made a number of advancements in smart search and rescue projects, including the development of the HKSOS mobile application, which assists rescuers in locating persons in need. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) The number of search and rescue cases involving mountaineering that required assistance for each of the past 5 years;
- (2) The development cost of the HKSOS app and the estimated maintenance expenditure for 2024-25;
- (3) The effectiveness of the HKSOS app in assisting rescuers with locating persons in need;
- (4) The total number of downloads of the HKSOS app since its launch; and
- (5) The strategies planned to promote the HKSOS app?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

- (1) The number of search and rescue cases involving mountaineering that required assistance in each of the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of search and rescue cases involving mountaineering that required assistance
2019	473
2020	1 172
2021	1 065
2022	811
2023	625

- (2) The HKSOS mobile application, which received funding from the Administrative Computer Projects Committee in 2023 and had a development cost of around \$7 million, was officially launched on 20 January 2024. The estimated expenditure on the application maintenance for 2024-25 is approximately \$2.4 million.
- (3) The HKSOS app is specially designed for outdoor activities to assist the public in planning their journeys and safeguard their lives. When a member of the public calls for help through the application, the 999 Reporting Centre will immediately receive the itinerary and location shared by the member of the public, thereby assisting search and rescue personnel to locate the person in need of help as soon as possible. The app utilises the patented “Signal Radar” technology, which, even in areas without network coverage, allows rescue teams to detect the caller’s geolocation through a distinctive signal. Furthermore, the HKSOS app features an automatic accident detection function that identifies prolonged journeys and high-risk scenarios (e.g. route deviations and abnormal behaviour patterns). Upon detection, it promptly notifies the 999 Reporting Centre and the user’s emergency contacts, thereby offering optimal protection for its users.
- (4) Since the launch in January 2024, the HKSOS app has recorded more than 54 000 downloads as at 5 March 2024.
- (5) The Police Force has been promoting the HKSOS app through different channels, including large-scale outdoor events, advertisements on the bodies of buses and minibuses, television interviews and the Force’s social media platforms. The Force is committed to continuing to promote the HKSOS app on various fronts.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB070

(Question Serial No. 0128)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the 999 Reporting Centres (the Centres), will the Government advise this Committee of:

- (1) the number of calls received by the Centres for each of the past 5 years;
- (2) the number of calls received by the Centres that were classified as “emergency calls”, with a breakdown by category of “emergency calls” for each of the past 5 years;
- (3) the number of calls received by the Centres that were not classified as “emergency calls”, with a breakdown by category of such calls for each of the past 5 years;
- (4) the current capacity of the Centres to answer calls simultaneously; and
- (5) the staff establishment, salary expenditure and total expenditure of the Centres for each of the past 5 years?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

- (1) The number of calls received by the 999 Reporting Centres (the Centres) for each of the past 5 years is as follows:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of calls	2 299 433	2 116 846	2 248 800	2 096 225	2 568 591

- (2) To ensure that the Police Force can deploy resources to handle cases in an optimal way based on the seriousness and urgency of the reported cases, the Centres categorise calls by subject matter, including “Emergency Reports”, “Non-emergency Reports”, “No Police Response”, “Nuisance Calls” and “Enquiries/Duplicated Calls”. Cases that fall into the “Emergency Reports” category include those concerning “Assault”, “Arson”, “Burglary”, “Robbery”, “Fire”, “Intruder alarm activated”, “Person drowning” and

“Bomb found”. The total number of calls received by the Centres that were classified as “Emergency Reports” for each of the past 5 years is as follows:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Emergency Reports	84 276	75 559	80 737	80 634	81 659

The Force does not maintain the breakdown requested in the question.

- (3) In addition to “Emergency Reports”, the remaining categories are “Non-emergency Reports”, “No Police Response”, “Nuisance Calls” and “Enquiries/Duplicated Calls”. The number of calls for these categories for each of the past 5 years is as follows:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Non-emergency Reports	555 049	544 000	543 521	462 318	449 037
No Police Response	398 904	325 406	360 546	412 754	461 213
Nuisance Calls	804 419	765 707	813 177	700 703	1 135 942
Enquiries/Duplicated Calls	456 785	406 174	450 819	439 816	440 740

- (4) All 999 calls made to the 999 Reporting Centres of the Regional Command and Control Centres (RCCCs) of the Force are answered by Police Communication Officers (PCOs), who provide 24-hour service in shifts. In 2023, the Centres received around 7 000 calls per day, with an average answer time of 7.8 seconds. The Force deploys manpower appropriately based on different circumstances to ensure sufficient staffing levels for prompt answering of calls.
- (5) The staff establishment at the RCCCs of the Force consists of police officers (officers at the rank of Superintendents, Inspectors, and Sergeants) and PCO grade officers (Senior PCOs and PCOs), who all provide 24-hour service in shifts. All calls made to the 999 Reporting Centres of the RCCCs are answered by PCOs who provide 24-hour service in shifts. Currently, 84 PCOs are assigned to answer 999 calls. The Force deploys manpower appropriately based on different circumstances. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the salary expenditure and total expenditure of the Centres for each year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB071

(Question Serial No. 3113)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Police Force hosted a multi-day event, “The Little Grape Carnival” (the carnival), in February this year to foster public awareness about deception. During the carnival, the Police unveiled the *Anti-scam Picture Book for Young Children* (the picture book) and presented an anti-deception themed ferry named “Ping On”, featuring mascots “The Little Grape”, “Chai Chai” and the “Ping On Family” moored near the venue. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following?

- (1) Regarding the carnival, the expenditure involved, the estimated number of attendees and the actual number of attendees;
- (2) Regarding the picture book, the expenditure involved for its design and printing, the number of copies printed and the distribution strategy;
- (3) Regarding the ferry “Ping On”, the expenditure involved and its expected service life; and
- (4) The distinctions between the anti-deception mascots “The Little Grape”, “Chai Chai” and the “Ping On Family”, and whether the Police have evaluated if the simultaneous presence of multiple anti-deception mascots could potentially confuse the public and affect the effectiveness of the anti-deception message.

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

(1) to (3)

To enhance public anti-deception awareness, particularly among children, the Police Force held “The Little Grape Carnival”, a large-scale outdoor installation art exhibition featuring “The Little Grape” the anti-scam mascot. This event took place from 17 to 23 February 2024 at the West Kowloon Cultural District. The carnival attracted over 10 000 visitors in the first two days, with a total exceeding 25 000 visitors recorded during the week-long event.

Additionally, the Force unveiled the newly released *Anti-scam Picture Book for Young Children* as part of the promotional campaign. Drawing on experiences and theories of early childhood education in Hong Kong, the picture book utilises colourful illustrations to enhance anti-deception awareness among children. To allow more children to access the picture book, 20 000 copies were produced by the Force through the Government Logistics Department following established procedures. These books have been distributed to approximately 1 000 kindergartens across the territory via each district's Police Community Relations Office, with 200 copies donated to public libraries and about 100 to children's wards or clinics. For easy access, the e-version of the children's picture book has been made available on the websites of the Force and the Education Bureau, as well as the Junior Police Call Application.

With the support of ferry operators, anti-scam mascots including "The Little Grape", "Chai Chai" and the "Ping On Family" will be featured on the anti-deception ferry Ping On for 1 year starting from February 2024. This 3-decker ferry, measuring approximately 65 metres in length, will operate general ferry services between Kwun Tong and North Point during the day and offer harbour cruises at night. The ferry's appearance is likely to attract public attention on both sides of Victoria Harbour, promoting anti-scam awareness among both citizens and tourists in an innovative way.

The expenditure for the above initiatives forms part of the total expenditure under the Programme of "Prevention and Detection of Crime". No specific breakdown is available.

(4)

Since mascots are generally effective at capturing public attention, they are used across various media platforms to promote the Force's initiatives. This strategy aims to broaden the reach of anti-scam and crime-prevention information, heighten public alertness to different types of crimes and make the Police's messages more relatable to everyday life.

The anti-scam mascot "The Little Grape", which is equivalent to the contraction of the saying "Beware of Liars" in Chinese, was unveiled in 2020. More than just reminding the public to "Stay Alert to Scams", it is crucial to instill the concept that "Ending Deception Starts with You". This encourages the public to share anti-deception messages with relatives and friends. With its adorable appearance and friendly character, "The Little Grape" captures children's attention and makes anti-deception education more engaging and understandable, enabling the Force to elevate public awareness against fraudulent activities.

"Chai Chai" was launched in 2021 to promote the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC) and the "Anti-Scam Helpline 18222" hotline. The wording "ADCC18222" displayed on "Chai Chai" is designed to encourage the public to call 18222 for assistance in suspicious deception cases, and to stay informed about the latest deception techniques and scam alerts.

In 2022, the Marine Region launched a crime prevention theme "MARPOL wish you SAFE" and introduced the crime prevention mascots, the "Ping On Family". Inspired by the Cheung Chau Ping On Bun, which symbolises peace and safety, this theme demonstrates the Marine Police's commitment to keeping the maritime community safe and collaborating with the community to spread crime prevention and safety messages. The "Ping On Family"

represents the 6 key anti-crime messages disseminated by the Marine Region, namely “SECURE home”, “Scam SAFE”, “Property SAFE”, “SAFE at Sea”, “Grow Up SAFE” and “SAFE from Animal Cruelty”.

In addition to continuously reviewing the effectiveness of its publicity efforts, the Force will adjust its publicity strategy based on public response.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB072

(Question Serial No. 0836)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Modern technologies play a crucial role in crime detection, a fact highlighted by the Police Force's statement on "developing the Force's various information and intelligence systems, particularly through the use of modern technologies". In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The estimated expenditure related to the introduction of modern technological systems by the Force for 2024-25;
2. Whether the Police plans to introduce systems specifically designed to combat the rising number of cyber crimes, such as those targeting telephone deception;
3. Whether the Police is collaborating with other government departments in turning services online, including inter-departmental coordination to streamline procedures for serving documents electronically.

Asked by: Hon LAM San-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. The expenditures on the Police Force's various information and intelligence systems form part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime" of the Force. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditures involved.
2. To tackle the escalating trend of deception cases, the Force sustained its efforts over the past year to step up enforcement, intercept fraudulent payments and adopt the approach of upstream scam intervention to mitigate victims' losses. The Force also rolled out multiple anti-deception measures with important stakeholders and supervisory bodies, and continued to raise anti-deception awareness among members of the public through various approaches.

The Force is committed to leveraging technology in collaboration with relevant stakeholders in the fight against deception. A dedicated working group, established with the Office of the Communications Authority and telecommunications operators in September 2022, has since implemented several initiatives. These include blocking spoofed calls originating outside local regions with the “+852” prefix, alerting users about such calls through voice or text messages, and, upon the Force’s request, intercepting or filtering over 7 600 website links and close to 3 200 phone numbers associated with fraud by January 2024. On the technical front, telecommunications operators also proactively identify and block a significant volume of scam calls.

Last year, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the banking sector, the Force introduced various anti-deception measures. Notably, in November 2023, the Faster Payment System (FPS) Suspicious Proxy ID Alert was launched, connecting the FPS platform to the “Scameter” database. During online fund transfer via FPS, the matching function of the database can identify payees whose information is related to scam reports, and an alert message will appear on the confirmation page. By 31 January 2024, this mechanism had issued over 264 000 alerts, flagging high-risk transfers totaling nearly \$410 million. The Force will continue to step up publicity and implement such mechanism in other platforms. Meanwhile, in late November 2023, the Force collaborated with 10 major banks in establishing the Anti-Deception Alliance (ADA), where bank representatives were deployed to work in the Police Headquarters to provide more direct and instant communication and assistance in intercepting fraudulent payments and issuing alerts. From its official launch on 27 November 2023 to the end of January 2024, the response time for 95% of payment interception requests was reduced to within 2 hours, markedly improving efficiency. In respect of upstream scam intervention, the ADA has proactively prevented 162 persons from making further transfers to fraudsters by the end of January 2024. Successful interventions rose from a daily average of 1.2 cases before the ADA’s establishment to 3.5 cases in January 2024, marking a 1.9-fold increase.

In September 2022 and February 2023, the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau introduced a one-stop scam and pitfall search engine, “Scameter”, on the “CyberDefender” website (CyberDefender.hk) and its mobile version “Scameter+” respectively to enable members of the public to distinguish suspicious online platform accounts, payment accounts, phone numbers, email addresses and URLs, etc, and to provide anti-fraud tips. As at 31 January 2024, “Scameter+” has been downloaded more than 228 000 times, while “Scameter” has recorded over 2.3 million searches and issued approximately 400 000 fraud and cybersecurity risk alerts. In February 2024, automation elements were incorporated in “Scameter+”, enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich the database of “Scameter+”, a public “reporting” mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application.

The Force remains dedicated to exploring advanced technological applications in the fight against various crimes, including deception and fraud.

3. The Force has been promoting the use of emails as an official mode of communication within the Government and with external parties or individuals to enhance cost-effectiveness and efficiency.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0301)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (4) Operations
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The provision for 2024-25 is \$772 million (14.9%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. Despite this increase, there will be a net decrease of 228 posts. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

1. The reason(s) and details for and a breakdown of the significant increase in the revised estimate;
2. For the reduced posts and establishment, the (i) formations, (ii) ranks of officers, (iii) duties undertaken and (iv) the payroll costs; and
3. The reason(s) for such a reduction in posts and establishment. Considering that one of the Programme's aims is to maintain the internal security of the territory, will this reduction affect the regular services provided?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

1. The estimate for 2024-25 is higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. This is mainly due to the increased provisions for salaries (including some vacancies expected to be filled in 2024-25), increased requirement in departmental expenses (including electricity charges, system maintenance charges and cleansing service charges), as well as increased cash flow requirement for capital items (including the replacement and procurement of plant, crafts, vehicles and equipment).
2. In 2024-25, there will be a net decrease of 228 posts in the establishment under Programme (4) "Operations" (including an increase of 8 disciplined service posts and a decrease of 210 disciplined service posts and 26 civilian posts). Details on the posts to be reduced and the salaries involved are tabulated as follows:

Rank	Number of posts to be reduced	Police Pay Scale (PPS)/ Master Pay Scale (MPS)	Monthly salary for the rank in HK\$ (from 1 April 2023)
Police Constable	-210	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	-210		
Office Assistant	-2	MPS 1 – 6	14,735 – 20,165
Senior Typist	-1	MPS 11 – 15	27,405 – 34,060
Typist	-2	MPS 2 – 10	15,665 – 25,815
Cook	-21	MPS 5 – 8	18,965 – 22,895
Total (civilian staff)	-26		
Total	-236		

3. To ensure fiscal sustainability, the Government has been strictly controlling the civil service establishment since 2021-22. In 2024-25, the Government will continue to adopt this approach to achieve zero growth in the civil service establishment. The Police Force has enhanced effectiveness and efficiency through reprioritisation, internal redeployment and streamlining of work processes in taking forward different new policies and initiatives. Posts deemed no longer essential for operation will be deleted following an establishment review.

The Force has formulated comprehensive human resources and strategic plans for staff training, career development, among others, to continuously enhance its capability. Officers are encouraged to make self-advancement and strengthen their own professional capacity so as to serve members of the public more effectively. The Force flexibly allocates resources to meet the policing needs and ensure community service needs are effectively met. In general, policing services will not be affected by the establishment adjustments.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB074

(Question Serial No. 0303)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

One of the targets of this Programme is to prevent and detect crime, including syndicated fraud. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. In respect of reports on online/telephone deception cases received by the Force, in tabular form, (i) the number of requests for assistance received, (ii) the number of victims, (iii) the amounts involved and (iv) the detection rate for the past 3 years;
2. The staff establishment and expenditure for publicity on anti-scam campaigns for the past 3 financial years and the coming financial year;
3. Since the introduction of the “Scameter” and the upgraded “Scameter+”, (i) the number of downloads, (ii) the usage figures, (iii) the total number of database entries, (iv) the number of alerts issued, and (v) the number of enforcement actions taken; and
4. Under this Programme, the provision for 2024-25 is 8.8% higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24 with a net increase of 7 posts, please provide the amounts that are related to the prevention and detection of deception cases, along with the details.

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

1. The number of deceptions and frauds reported to the Police Force, the detection rate, the amount involved and the number of persons arrested for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Number of cases	19 249	27 923	39 824
Detection rate	10.6%	12.0%	11.9%
Amount involved (HK\$)	Over 6.4 billion	Over 4.8 billion	9.18 billion
Number of persons arrested	2 835	4 112	7 043

The common types of deception and fraud reported to the Force as well as the amount involved for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	Number of cases			Amount of losses (HK\$ million)		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Online Deception	13 859	19 599	27 314	2,965.8	3,073.8	5,345.9
Common types of online scam						
E-shopping Fraud	6 120	8 735	8 950	71.5	74.1	190.5
Online Investment Fraud	980	1 884	5 105	472.0	926.5	3,267.4
Phishing Scam (Note)			4 322			102.4
Online Employment Fraud	1 063	2 884	3 518	85.3	459.1	760.2
Social Media Deception	3 638	3 605	3 372	669.4	779.0	745.4
Email Scam	549	391	208	1,538.8	751.1	163.6
Telephone Deception	1 140	2 831	3 213	811.1	1,076.5	1,102.8
Guess Who	497	1 540	2 237	27.5	114.1	188.7
Pretend Officials	641	1 290	969	783.5	962.3	913.8
Detained Son	2	1	7	0.1	0.07	0.3

(Note) Figures related to phishing scam have been maintained by the Force since 2023.

The Force does not maintain any breakdowns on the numbers of victims and cases detected by the above-mentioned types of deception and fraud.

2. “Enhancing cyber security and fighting technology crime” remains one of the Commissioner’s Operational Priorities (COP) in 2024 and “combating quick cash crime” of the COP 2023 has been amended to “combating deception and quick cash crime”. The Force has been taking proactive measures on all fronts to combat deception and technology crimes. The Commercial Crime Bureau (CCB) and its Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC), the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB), the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau and the crime investigation units of various Police Regions and Districts are all dedicated to cracking down on scams and technology-related crimes.

As various formations of the Force are involved in anti-deception publicity and education, a separate breakdown of the manpower involved is not available. For ADCC, which is mainly tasked with the above-mentioned duties, the staff establishment has grown in each of the past 3 years: from 40 in 2021-22 to 49 in 2022-23, with 32 being permanent establishment and 17 on secondment from different Force formations. In 2023-24, the ADCC’s staff establishment expanded further to 90, with permanent establishment increasing by 5 to 37, and the remainder filled by 53 officers on secondment or Post-Retirement Service Contracts. In 2024-25, the number of permanent establishment in the ADCC will increase by 3 to 40. The Force will periodically review the manpower and resources of various formations and adjust the establishment as needed.

The above expenditure forms part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) “Prevention and Detection of Crime”. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

3. In September 2022, the CSTCB launched a one-stop scam and pitfall search engine, “Scameter”, on the “CyberDefender” website (CyberDefender.hk), and launched its mobile application version, “Scameter+”, in February 2023 to enable members of the public to distinguish suspicious online platform accounts, payment accounts, phone numbers, email addresses and URLs, etc, and to provide anti-fraud tips. As at 31 January 2024, “Scameter+” has been downloaded more than 228 000 times, while the search engine has recorded 2.3 million searches and issued approximately 400 000 fraud and cybersecurity risk alerts.

In February 2024, automation elements were incorporated in “Scameter+”, enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich the database, a public “reporting” mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application. The Force will review and update the database periodically to ensure the data remain accurate and up-to-date.

Both “Scameter” and “Scameter+” have been rolled out to facilitate the identification of suspicious information, such as platform accounts, phone numbers and URLs. As these initiatives do not directly involve law enforcement efforts, no enforcement figures are available.

4. In 2024-25, there will be a net increase of 7 posts under Programme (2) “Prevention and Detection of Crime” (including an increase of 28 disciplined services posts as well as a decrease of 3 disciplined services posts and 18 civilian posts). Among these, 11 disciplined services posts will be created to strengthen Hong Kong’s anti-deception capability. Since the estimated expenditure for the prevention and detection of deception cases falls under the Programme of “Prevention and Detection of Crime”, the Force does not maintain specific breakdown.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB075

(Question Serial No. 1506)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Police will address illegal bookmaking due to the increasing severity of illegal gambling. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following?

1. The number of enforcement actions taken by the Police against illegal gambling for each year from 2018-19 to 2023-24;
2. The number of betting slips seized and the total amount involved in the aforementioned operations for each year from 2018-19 to 2023-24;
3. The types of illegal gambling (e.g. mahjong, soccer, horse racing, basketball, electronic sports) encountered in the aforementioned operations from 2018-19 to 2023-24, with a breakdown by year and category;
4. The manpower and expenditure dedicated to combating illegal bookmaking from 2018-19 to 2023-24; and
5. The number of persons sentenced to suspended imprisonment, fines and imprisonment among those convicted by the courts, as well as the administrative costs incurred, for each year from 2018-19 to 2023-24.

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 47)

Reply:

- 1-2. The number of enforcement actions taken by the Police Force against illegal gambling offences (e.g. serious gambling offences such as operating or managing an unlawful gambling establishment, bookmaking, gambling in a gambling establishment, gambling in a street, etc.) and the amount of money seized over the past 5 years are set out below:

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of enforcement actions taken	560	680	742	788	793
Total value of betting slips / money seized (\$ million)	4.7	601.8	3,978.2	547.9	27.6

The Force does not maintain the other figures mentioned in the question.

3. The Force does not maintain the breakdown of the figures involved.
4. The expenditure of addressing illegal gambling forms part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) “Prevention and Detection of Crime”. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.
5. The Force does not maintain the number of convictions or other relevant information.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB076

(Question Serial No. 1507)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Despite periodic enforcement actions by the Police against illegal betting activities, there has been an upward trend in the number of people engaging in illegal bookmaking. In this connection, please advise on the following:

1. The manpower and expenditure allocated to the prevention and detection of illegal gambling for each of the past 5 years.
2. The number of illegal gambling cases investigated by the Police and the respective detection rates for each of the past 5 years.
3. The total amounts seized from the detection of illegal gambling for each of the past 5 years, specifying the amounts attributed to physical gambling and online betting, respectively.
4. The number of detected cases related to local, Mainland and overseas triad societies for each of the past 5 years.
5. The number of illegal gambling cases involving telephone or online deception detected by the Police in the past 5 years.

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 48)

Reply:

1. The relevant expenditures form part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". The Police Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditures involved.
- 2-3, 5. The numbers of operations conducted, persons arrested and amounts seized by the Force in combating illegal gambling offences (including serious gambling activities such as operating or managing an unlawful gambling establishment and bookmaking, as well as gambling in a gambling establishment or on the street) in the past 5 years are set out below:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of operations conducted	560	680	742	788	793
Number of persons arrested	3 296	5 198	5 731	6 781	6 101
Total amount of betting slips/cash seized (\$ million)	4.7	601.8	3,978.2	547.9	27.6

The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the number, the detection rate, or other specific figures requested in the question regarding all “illegal gambling” cases.

4. The number of cases involving “serious gambling offences” (including operating or managing an unlawful gambling establishment, and bookmaking) reported to the Force, as well as the number of those cases related to triads over the past 5 years, is tabulated as follows:

(Number of cases)	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Serious gambling offences	277	390	560	607	488
<i>Triad-related</i>	<i>156</i>	<i>208</i>	<i>233</i>	<i>323</i>	<i>305</i>

Combating triads, syndicated and organised crime is one of the Commissioner’s Operational Priorities. The Force has been strengthening and maintaining close liaison with local and overseas law enforcement agencies to mount intelligence-led enforcement operations and counter triad-personalities and their activities. At the same time, the Force also takes proactive measures to investigate, confiscate and freeze the proceeds of such crimes and to conduct large scale anti-triad operations. The police authorities of Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao mounted a tripartite operation codenamed “THUNDERBOLT 2023” from June to September 2023. In Hong Kong, the Force arrested 6 400 persons suspected of committing offences such as those relating to triads, dangerous drugs and operating illegal gambling establishments.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB077

(Question Serial No. 1932)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-yee)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned that the number of applicants for the position of police constable in the Police Force increased by 74% following the adjustment of the entry requirements in May 2023. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following?

1. The expenditure on all police recruitment campaigns and whether the effectiveness of these campaigns has been assessed;
2. Any specific strategies to be implemented for recruiting police officers, along with the details of these plans;
3. The number of auxiliary police officers who have been appointed as regular police officers in the past 5 years; and
4. (i) The wastage figures and wastage rates of police officers at various ranks, (ii) with a breakdown by reasons, and (iii) the average length of service of these officers over the past 5 years.

Asked by: Hon LEE Chun-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

1. The Police Force has been adjusting its publicity strategy in light of general social conditions such as the economic situation and demand in the labour market. Different forms of collaboration have also been adopted in order to make more cost-effective use of resources for promoting recruitment. The Force does not maintain breakdown figures on the expenditure involved.
2. The Force has been adopting proactive recruitment strategies to attract high calibre candidates who have the competence to become a police officer, the affection for the Motherland and Hong Kong, and the passion to serve the public.

Meanwhile, the Force has disseminated recruitment and publicity information through various media and social networking platforms, and has organised regular recruitment activities and projects, such as the Police Recruitment Experience and Assessment Day, Police Mentorship Programme, Police University Recruitment Express, Hong Kong Police University Recruitment Express (Mainland), Diploma of Applied Education – Police Cadet Training, Auxiliary Undergraduate Scheme, Police Recruitment Buddies Scheme, Sportsmen’s Programme for Recruitment, Experience and Development, Auxiliary Police Recruitment Express, education and careers expo as well as publicity videos featuring “Recruitment Spokespersons”, etc.

The Force will continue to adjust its publicity strategy in light of general social conditions such as the economic situation and demand in the labour market.

3. The number of auxiliary police officers appointed as regular police officers since the financial year 2020-21 is tabulated as follows.

Financial year	No. of officers	
	Probationary Inspector	Police Constable
2020-21	21	20
2021-22	24	19
2022-23	26	14
2023-24	31	32

The Force does not maintain the relevant figures before the financial year 2020-21.

4. The wastage figures of police officers in the Force over the past 5 financial years are set out below:

Rank	Reasons of leaving	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24 (As at 29 February 2024)	
		No. of leavers	Wastage rate	No. of leavers	Wastage rate	No. of leavers	Wastage rate	No. of leavers	Wastage rate	No. of leavers	Wastage rate
Gazetted officer Note 1	Retirement or end of contract	54	11.8%	42	9.1%	28	6.5%	17	3.9%	19	4.3%
	Resignation	1	0.2%	2	0.4%	2	0.5%	1	0.2%	1	0.2%
	Others Note 2	0	0%	2	0.4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Inspectorate officer	Retirement or end of contract	62	2.5%	62	2.5%	38	1.6%	17	0.7%	11	0.5%
	Resignation	28	1.1%	28	1.1%	40	1.7%	32	1.3%	18	0.7%
	Others Note 2	7	0.3%	5	0.2%	6	0.3%	6	0.3%	3	0.1%
Junior officer	Retirement or end of contract	708	2.7%	533	2.1%	364	1.5%	263	1.1%	412	1.7%
	Resignation	362	1.4%	206	0.8%	210	0.8%	193	0.8%	191	0.8%
	Others Note 2	91	0.3%	95	0.4%	118	0.5%	86	0.4%	143	0.6%

Note 1: Gazetted officers refer to those of the rank of superintendent or above.

Note 2: Other reasons for leaving include transfer, dismissal, termination of service, death, retirement on invaliding and compulsory retirement.

The number of leavers in the Force broken down by years of service in each of the past 5 years is set out below:

Rank	Years of service	No. of leavers				
		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (As at 29 February 2024)
Gazetted officer ^{Note 3}	10 years or below	0	1	0	0	0
	11-20 years	0	0	0	0	1
	21-30 years	13	12	6	8	5
	Over 30 years	42	33	24	10	14
Inspectorate officer	10 years or below	26	28	34	25	14
	11-20 years	6	2	10	9	5
	21-30 years	18	11	11	8	4
	Over 30 years	47	54	29	13	9
Junior officer	10 years or below	367	227	237	194	208
	11-20 years	50	32	41	43	75
	21-30 years	124	109	103	102	102
	Over 30 years	620	466	311	203	361

Note 3: Gazetted officers refer to officers of the rank of superintendent or above.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**SB078****(Question Serial No. 1935)**

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is stated under this Programme that one of the primary responsibilities of the Police Force is to organise anti-crime publicity programmes to address specific crime problems, such as "Telephone Deception" (including Pretend Officials Telephone Deception). In this connection, will the Government provide this Committee with the following information?

1. In tabular form, (i) the number of reported telephone deception cases, (ii) the age range of the victims, and (iii) the amount of monetary losses for the past 5 years; and
2. Details of any targeted plans the Police intends to implement to strengthen enforcement actions against telephone deception in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon LEE Chun-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

1. The number of telephone deception cases reported to the Police Force, along with the amount of monetary losses and the age range of the victims, for each of the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of cases	648	1 193	1 140	2 831	3 213
Amount of losses (HK\$ million)	150.0	574.8	811.1	1,076.5	1,102.8
Age range of the victims	15-93	12-92	12-96	14-100	15-107

2. Deception syndicates utilise a multitude of stooze accounts to collect fraudulent payments and launder money. Therefore, targeting stooze accounts is a vital strategy in dismantling the fraud industry chain, which includes activities such as telephone deception. In 2023, the Force arrested a total of 9 239 persons for involvement in various types of deception and money laundering offences, representing an increase of

over 75% compared to 2022. Among these, about 6 500 were stooge account holders. The Force has reached a consensus with the Department of Justice to enhance evidence gathering and prosecution procedures for relatively simple and straightforward money laundering cases involving stooge accounts and to expedite prosecution. Moreover, the Force will continue to apply to the court for enhanced sentencing and has, since 2023, achieved a 20% increase in the sentences of 4 stooge account holders, leading to imprisonment terms ranging from 26 to 38 months.

To combat telephone deception, the Force established a dedicated working group with the Office of the Communications Authority and mobile network operators in September 2022, and since then, several initiatives have been implemented. Apart from blocking spoofed calls originating from outside local regions with the prefix “+852”, and sending text or voice alerts to users when they receive such calls, mobile network operators have blocked or filtered over 7 600 websites and nearly 3 200 telephone numbers associated with deception cases upon the Force’s request by January 2024, and have been on the technical front proactively identifying and blocking a significant volume of calls made using technical devices and suspending related services.

The Force has also been proactively using technology to prevent members of the public from being exposed to fraudulent calls. In February 2024, automation elements were incorporated in “Scameter+”, enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich its database, a public “reporting” mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application. The Force will review and update the database periodically to ensure that the data remain accurate and up-to-date.

In addition to stepping up enforcement and enhancing prosecution efficiency, the Force will rigorously combat the use of stooge accounts by deception syndicates in committing crimes through applications for enhanced sentencing. Approaches such as interception of fraudulent payments and upstream scam intervention will be adopted to minimise victims’ losses. Furthermore, the Force will continue to raise anti-deception awareness of members of the public through online and offline publicity and actively seek to maintain close cooperation with stakeholders from various sectors, relevant government departments and other law enforcement agencies, including those in the Mainland and overseas, so as to create synergy in combating deception cases.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB079

(Question Serial No. 2555)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Road Safety

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

The Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) has periodically carried out enforcement actions against the illegal use of electric mobility devices in various districts across the territory. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) The number of enforcement actions taken by the Police, with a breakdown by the 18 districts for each of the past 5 years;
- (2) The quantity of electric mobility devices detained, with a breakdown by type of such devices for each of the past 5 years;
- (3) The number of the persons arrested by the Police, with a breakdown by gender and age group for each of the past 5 years; and
- (4) The number of the persons arrested by the Police, with a breakdown by type of offence for each of the past 5 years.

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

(1) to (4)

Combating the illegal use of electric mobility devices is among the Police Force's Selected Traffic Enforcement Priorities. The number of persons arrested, with breakdown by Police Region from 2019 to 2023, is tabulated as follows:

Police Region	The number of persons arrested in relation to the illegal use of electric mobility devices				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Hong Kong Island	0	9	6	20	10
Kowloon East	0	39	49	21	21
Kowloon West	7	27	12	28	37
New Territories South	1	113	63	46	67
New Territories North	4	74	67	105	127
Marine (Cheung Chau)	0	12	10	16	5
Total	12	274	207	236	267

The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the figures as requested in the question.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB080

(Question Serial No. 2182)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the police officer establishment, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the current establishment, the number of serving police officers and the number of vacancies in the Force;
2. the annual wastage figures and the number of police officers recruited for the past 3 years;
3. the estimated retirement figures for the next 2 years; and
4. the measures that the Police will implement to entice members of the public to join the Force, as well as the estimated relevant expenditure on manpower and publicity.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Man-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

1. As at 29 February 2024, the establishment of police officers is tabulated as follows:

Actual establishment	Actual strength	Number of vacancies
33 260	27 110	6 150

2. The wastage figures of the Police Force are tabulated as follows:

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at 29 February 2024)
Wastage of police officers	806	615	798

The number of police officers recruited by the Force is tabulated as follows:

Police officers recruited	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Probationary Inspector	170	165	157
Police Constable	484	554	817
Police Constable (Auxiliary)	331	343	350
Total	985	1 062	1 324

3. Approximately 900 police officers are expected to reach their retirement age within the next 2 financial years.
4. The Force has been adopting proactive recruitment strategies to attract high calibre candidates who have the competence to become a police officer, the affection for the Motherland and Hong Kong, and the passion to serve the public.

The Force has disseminated recruitment and publicity information through various media and social networking platforms, and has organised regular recruitment activities and projects, such as the Police Recruitment Experience and Assessment Day, Police Mentorship Programme, Police University Recruitment Express, Police University Recruitment Express (Mainland), Diploma of Applied Education - Police Cadet Training, Auxiliary Undergraduate Scheme, Police Recruitment Buddies Scheme, Sportsmen's Programme for Recruitment, Auxiliary Police Recruitment Express, education and careers expo as well as publicity videos featuring "Recruitment Spokespersons", etc.

Apart from local publicity and recruitment campaigns, the Force has launched the Police University Recruitment Express (Mainland) since November 2022 in view of the rising number of Hong Kong students studying in the Mainland in recent years, which aims to recruit them and facilitate early commencement of foundation training upon their graduation and return to Hong Kong. Besides, the Force sent delegations to Wuhan, Guangdong, Fujian, Chengdu, Beijing and Shanghai to deliver recruitment talks, provide recruitment information and conduct on-site recruitment selection procedures for Hong Kong students studying in universities thereat.

Furthermore, the Force has been conducting publicity and recruitment campaigns in overseas cities such as London, Toronto and Sydney. In 2018, the Force extended the Police Mentorship Programme to include Hong Kong students from overseas universities, with a view to enhancing their understanding of policing work and encouraging them to join the Force upon graduation. Following the return to full normalcy of society after the pandemic, the Force will resume overseas recruitment campaigns in a progressive manner to attract high calibre candidates to become police officers and facilitate their participation in the recruitment process. It is the Force's initial plan to resume publicity and recruitment campaigns overseas (such as the United Kingdom) later this year.

The Force regularly reviews its recruitment policy to ensure that the entry requirements are up-to-date while the Force's competitiveness in the human resources market is

maintained. With effect from 5 May 2023, the Force has adjusted the entry requirements. For the positions of police constable (including auxiliary police constable) and probationary inspector, the minimum height and weight requirements have been removed to align with other disciplined services. Applicants are allowed to pass the visual acuity test with the use of spectacles or contact lenses, while the requirement for colour perception test remains unchanged. Moreover, for the position of police constable (including auxiliary police constable), applicants may choose to sit for a Recruit Police Constable Written Examination newly introduced by the Force.

The Force will continue to adjust its publicity strategy in light of general social conditions such as the economic situation and demand in the labour market. The Force does not maintain a breakdown on the expenditure involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**SB081****(Question Serial No. 2183)**

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

In view of the wide range of tactics adopted in fraud cases and an upward trend in the number of cases involving deception in recent years, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- 1 the number of fraud cases of various types, including “Social Media Deception”, “E-shopping Fraud”, “Naked Chat Blackmail”, “Email Scam”, “Online Employment Fraud”, “Online Investment Fraud” and “Telephone Deception” reported and successfully prosecuted in the past 3 years; and
- 2 the estimated manpower and expenditure of the Police for anti-deception publicity programmes in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Man-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

- 1 The numbers of deception and naked chat blackmail cases reported to the Police Force in each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	Number of cases		
	2021	2022	2023
Deception	19 249	27 923	39 824
Online Deception	13 859	19 599	27 314
<i>Part of types of online scam</i>			
<i>E-shopping Fraud</i>	6 120	8 735	8 950
<i>Online Investment Fraud</i>	980	1 884	5 105
<i>Online Employment Fraud</i>	1 063	2 884	3 518
<i>Social Media Deception</i>	3 638	3 605	3 372
<i>Email Scam</i>	549	391	208
Telephone Deception	1 140	2 831	3 213
Naked Chat Blackmail	1 159	1 402	2 117

The Force does not maintain statistics on the number of prosecutions and convictions for the respective crimes.

- 2 The expenditure for anti-scam publicity and education forms part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB082

(Question Serial No. 1680)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Under the Indicators for this Programme, the number of juveniles arrested for crime in 2023 reached 1 035, an increase of about 5.1% compared to the 985 reported in 2022. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) The number of juveniles arrested, categorised by type of crime, for the past 5 years;
- 2) The ratio of juveniles who have been arrested more than once; and
- 3) The provision allocated by the Police for the prevention of juvenile delinquency, and the proportion of such provision to the overall provision for the prevention and detection of crime?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

- 1) The number of juveniles (aged 10-15) arrested for committing criminal offences, categorised by type of crime, for the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Juveniles (aged 10-15)	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Wounding and serious assault	156	221	174	197	196
Shop theft	128	184	99	68	106
Indecent assault	62	36	65	68	99
Criminal damage	122	120	156	126	93
Miscellaneous thefts	120	89	84	91	92
Deception	9	16	12	9	39
Unlawful society offences	22	22	38	71	37
Arson	13	37	32	18	25
Disorder/fighting in public place	25	35	18	28	24
Serious drug offences	20	42	89	43	18
Offences against public order	231	156	61	26	13
Robbery	14	28	28	4	13
Possession of offensive weapons	38	45	20	13	12
Others	180	187	238	223	268
Total	1 140	1 218	1 114	985	1 035

- 2) The Police Force does not maintain the relevant figures.
- 3) The Force has consistently focused on juvenile crime by dedicating significant resources to deter youth from engaging in illegal activities. Initiatives include establishing the “Leadership Institute on Narcotics” and the Junior Police Call. Moreover, since February last year, the Force has partnered with the Education Bureau to routinely develop teaching materials and offer crime prevention training for primary and secondary school teachers in Hong Kong. In this vein, the Force has produced the “Youth Crime Prevention Booklet” series for 2 consecutive years to aid educators and parents in crime prevention education. In January 2024, the Force contributed to the Po Leung Kuk Teacher Development Day by sharing strategies to address youth crime and the latest crime prevention insights with 1 000 primary school principals and teachers. Additionally, the Force is scheduled to participate in the teacher development days of 5 secondary schools between March and April. Furthermore, the Force visited the Education University of Hong Kong in January 2024 to engage with 220 prospective teachers, who are pursuing diplomas or master’s degrees in education, on subjects including digital literacy, anti-drug initiatives and child protection. This aims to shed light on the trends in youth crime for more effective crime prevention education.

The expenditure for prevention of juvenile delinquency forms part of the total expenditure under the Programme (2) “Prevention and Detection of Crime”. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB083

(Question Serial No. 1681)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The revised financial provision for the prevention and detection of crime in 2023-24 has been substantially reduced by 13.7% as compared with that of 2022-23. Moreover, the estimated financial provision for 2024-25 is projected to decrease by 6.1% as compared with that of 2022-23. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- a) The reasons for the consecutive reductions in financial provisions over the past 2 financial years;
- b) Whether the decreased financial provisions for relevant project items will affect the overall efficiency in the prevention and detection of crime; and
- c) The provision utilised by the Police in the last 5 years for developing various information and intelligence system of the Force, particularly in strengthening crime investigation capabilities through the use of modern technologies.

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

- a) The revised estimate for 2023-24 and the estimate for 2024-25 of the Police Force under the Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime" are lower than the actual expenditure for 2022-23. This is mainly due to the expected decrease in the operational expenses.
- b) The Force will conduct timely assessments and deploy resources flexibly based on actual needs, aiming to meet the community's demand for policing services and to prevent and detect crimes more effectively. In 2023, a total of 90 276 crimes were recorded in Hong Kong, marking an increase of 28.9% compared with 2022. The upsurge was mainly attributed to the increase in deception cases and the society's resumption of normalcy, which led to a rise in traditional crimes. The overall detection rate was 31.1%. Leaving deception cases aside, the detection rate was 46.2%, similar to those over the past 10 years.

- c) In keeping up with the times, the Force is committed to developing various information and intelligence systems by harnessing modern technology, aiming to strengthen its crime investigation capabilities. The expenditures related to the information and intelligence systems form part of the total expenditure under the Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". No specific breakdown is available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB084

(Question Serial No. 1682)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (4) Operations
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The indicators provided under this Programme show a significant increase in the number of “non-ethnic Chinese (including Vietnamese) illegal immigrants arrested/intercepted” and the number of “forged identity cards seized” in 2023. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- a) The reason(s) for the significant increase in these 2 specific offences;
- b) The initiatives that the Police intends to implement in response to the significant increase of these 2 offences; and
- c) The provision allocated by the Police to address these 2 offences over the past 5 years.

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

- a) Following the resumption of international flights in the Mainland after the pandemic, the Mainland visa-issuing authorities abroad have resumed issuing visas to Mainland China to foreigners since March 2023. Coupled with rumors inducing illegal immigrants to come to Hong Kong, the number of non-ethnic Chinese illegal immigrants arrested in Hong Kong has increased notably in the second half of 2023. These illegal immigrants came to Hong Kong mainly to improve their livelihood.

The number of forged identity cards seized varies depending on the quantity of exhibits found in criminal cases. The increase in the quantity of exhibits in 2023 was mainly attributed to illegal workers, overstayers and illegal immigrants arrested in Hong Kong.

- b) To intercept illegal immigration activities, the Police Force has, since August 2023, further maintained close liaison with the Immigration Department (ImmD) and related Mainland law enforcement agencies. It has continuously strengthened intelligence-sharing for illegal immigration cases by holding anti-illegal immigration working meetings and practicing information exchange. Joint operations with both Mainland

and local authorities have also been conducted to address the problems of illegal immigrants, their illegal employment and involvement in illegal activities in Hong Kong. For example, inter-departmental operations codenamed “Champion” and “Powerplayer” were conducted with the ImmD and the Labour Department. Additionally, the Marine Police has collaborated with Mainland authorities to enhance sea patrols by exchanging real-time radar surveillance information for joint preventive actions. This collaboration aims to maximize the frequency and coverage of joint sea patrols at critical locations and times. High-profile patrols are carried out at boarding and landing blackspots along the seashore, with actions such as interception, stopping of vessels, and arresting relevant persons before illegal immigrants enter Hong Kong waters.

With enhanced and coordinated enforcement actions taken by law enforcement authorities in Guangdong and Hong Kong, the number of non-ethnic Chinese illegal immigrants arrested in Hong Kong has been decreasing since November 2023: from 364 persons in October 2023 to 249, 96, 67 and 43 persons in November 2023, December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024 respectively, representing a significant decline of nearly 90% compared to the peak in October 2023.

- c) The Force will deploy manpower, including frontline and criminal investigation units, appropriately across the territory for enforcement actions in response to the trend of illegal immigration activities. No specific staff establishment or additional estimated expenditures is involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB085

(Question Serial No. 0054)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Last year, Hong Kong experienced a significant surge in deception cases, with nearly 40 000 cases reported. This marked an increase of approximately 10 000 cases as compared to 2022. Among the prevalent scams are “click farms” and “quick cash crimes”, where scammers often impersonate customer service representatives for businesses. They lure victims by offering commissions and promising refunds after purchases, only to ultimately refuse to return funds under various pretexts. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. Given the rise of “click farm” scams, where fraudsters impersonate customer service representatives for businesses or renowned international brands and contact victims through official-looking accounts on instant messaging apps, will the Police consider partnering with these apps/platforms? Such a collaboration could entail the platforms reporting dubious phone numbers or accounts, especially those requesting business accounts, to the Police Anti-Deception Coordination Centre. This would enable the Police to proactively verify and investigate potential fraud, aiming to prevent scammers from reaching the public via fraudulent business accounts.
2. Two years ago, the Police launched the “Scameter”, a scam and pitfall search engine accessible via a website and mobile app. Please provide the total development and upgrade costs for “Scameter”, the total number of searches conducted, and the number of searches that yielded information on scams or online security risks.
3. Regarding public education on fraud prevention, including advertising, publicity campaigns and seminars, please provide the expenditure for these initiatives over the last year. Please also advise whether assessments of their effectiveness have been conducted.

Asked by: Hon MA Fung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

1. The Police Force has been conducting online patrols and enforcement actions from time to time to proactively combat various cybercrimes. In cases where suspicious fraudulent online advertisements or posts are identified, the Force will swiftly request relevant advertisers and website operators to remove such advertisements and websites, and will actively track down the whereabouts of the fraudsters. The Force consistently adopts a multi-agency approach to maintain a close and effective liaison mechanism with social media platforms. If crime-related information is found on a social media platform, the Force contacts the platform concerned, ensuring that timely action is taken to prevent exploitation for criminal purposes. In 2023, the Force requested various social media platforms to remove or review over 12 000 fraud-related pages or accounts.

In addition, the Force, the Office of the Communications Authority and mobile network operators jointly set up a dedicated working group in September 2022 to explore measures for tackling scams at the source. Mobile network operators, acting on information provided by the Force, proactively block or suspend services of telephone numbers suspected of fraud and restrict access to suspicious websites. By the end of January 2024, over 7 600 websites and nearly 3 200 telephone numbers involved in fraud cases had been successfully blocked or filtered.

The Force also encourages members of the public to optimise the use of the round-the-clock enquiry hotline “Anti-Scam Helpline 18222”, “Scameter” and “Scameter+” to assess instantly the risk of online scams and cyber pitfalls, and to report scams proactively. In November 2023, the Force launched the Faster Payment System Suspicious Proxy ID Alert in collaboration with 44 banks and stored value facilities operators. It is an initiative based on the information available from the “Scameter”, aiming to enhance the alert mechanism to users of the associated risks before conducting transactions. By 31 January 2024, this mechanism had issued over 264 000 alerts, flagging high-risk transfers totaling nearly \$410 million. The Force will continue to step up publicity and adopt such mechanism in other platforms.

2. The Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau launched a one-stop scam and pitfall search engine “Scameter” on the “CyberDefender” website (CyberDefender.hk) in September 2022 and launched the mobile application version “Scameter+” in February 2023 to enable members of the public to identify suspicious online platform accounts, payment accounts, phone numbers, email addresses and URLs, etc, and to provide fraud prevention tips. As at 31 January 2024, the “Scameter” has recorded over 2.3 million searches and issued approximately 400 000 alerts on frauds and cyber security risks.

In February 2024, automation elements were incorporated in “Scameter+”, enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich the database of the search engine, a public “reporting” mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application.

The above expenditure forms part of the total expenditure under the Programme (2) “Prevention and Detection of Crime”. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

The Force will continue to study how to combat fraud with the use of advanced technology.

3. The Force has been adopting a multi-agency approach by collaborating with other government departments, regulatory agencies and industry stakeholders. Through different platforms and media, the Force has conducted various anti-crime publicity and educational campaigns and large-scale thematic crime prevention activities to raise public awareness of the risks associated with the use of computer, Internet, social media and cyber security, which in turn heighten their alertness to deception.

As part of the Force's ongoing efforts to prevent deception, an extensive publicity strategy has been adopted to disseminate anti-deception messages by utilising multiple channels online and offline, with a view to enhancing the anti-deception awareness among members of the public. This includes broadcasting anti-deception publicity clips and television series; conducting anti-deception talks; producing teaching materials for primary and secondary schools; launching a WhatsApp channel; registering on various social media platforms, such as Xiaohongshu; and holding press conferences on the latest deception modi operandi as well as large-scale publicity campaigns.

In June 2023, the Force, in collaboration with government departments and public and private organisations, recruited and trained SILVERSHIELD ambassadors, utilising community power to spread the message "Scams are rampant; Tell everyone". To enhance public alertness to phishing scams, the Force launched a new round of anti-deception activities in August, which included the releasing of an anti-fraud promotional song by a renowned musician. August also marked the "Anti-Money Laundering Month", during which the Force rolled out a series of promotional activities to remind the public not to rent, lend or sell their bank accounts. In December, the Force organised the inaugural Anti-Scam Charity Run under the theme of anti-deception, attracting over 1 700 participants. Additionally, at the end of January this year, the Force hosted the Cyber Defenders' Carnival 2024 at HarbourChill Wan Chai to promote cyber security awareness. In February, the "Little Grape Family Carnival" was held in the West Kowloon Cultural District, featuring the "Little Grape's Sea, Land, and Air Parade" on 18 February, which drew an attendance of more than 25 000 visitors. The latest anti-deception publicity initiatives also encompass various "embedded marketing" methods, such as printing anti-deception messages on coffee cup sleeves provided by coffee chains, and the recent commissioning of the anti-deception ferry "Ping On", which set sail in February this year, marking a novel channel for disseminating anti-scam messages.

The Force will continue to enhance its publicity efforts in a bid to raise the public's alertness to deceptions and technology crimes.

The expenditure incurred by various formations of the Force on anti-deception initiatives, including anti-scam public educational programmes, forms part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved. The Force will from time to time review the effectiveness of the initiatives.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**SB086****(Question Serial No. 1285)**Head: (122) Hong Kong Police ForceSubhead (No. & title): ()Programme: (4) OperationsControlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)Director of Bureau: Secretary for SecurityQuestion:

Regarding the various replacement plans of the Marine Police launches, please provide the types, basic features (total length/crew members/speed), estimated commissioning time, and estimates of expenditure of the new launches procured as from 2022, as well as the types of serving police launches that will be replaced by the new ones.

Asked by: Hon MA Fung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)Reply:

Details of the launch replacement programmes as from 2022 are set out in the following table:

Type of police launch to be procured	Basic features (Length Overall (LOA)/ Operational Manning Standard (OMS)/Speed)	Estimated commissioning time	Total estimate (\$)	Type of serving police launch to be replaced
High-speed Interceptor	LOA: 14.2 metres OMS: 5 crew Speed: minimum 66 knots	3 vessels delivered in 2023; the remaining 2 vessels scheduled for delivery in 2024	126.31 million (5 vessels)	Damen Cougartek Sea Stalker
Versatile Patrol Launch	LOA: 37 metres OMS: 16 crew (including one Cook) Speed: minimum 25 knots	Contract signed in the fourth quarter of 2023; scheduled for delivery in 2025-2028	2,218.10 million (12 vessels)	Divisional Command Launch and Keka Launch
Mobile Response and Command Platform	LOA: 41 metres OMS: 19 crew (including one Cook) Speed: minimum 25 knots	Contract signed in the fourth quarter of 2023; scheduled for delivery in 2026	375.83 million (2 vessels)	Regional Training Launch

Type of police launch to be procured	Basic features (Length Overall (LOA)/ Operational Manning Standard (OMS)/Speed)	Estimated commissioning time	Total estimate (\$)	Type of serving police launch to be replaced
Divisional Logistic Launch	LOA: 12-17 metres OMS: 4 crew Speed: minimum 35 knots	Contract expected to be signed in the second quarter of 2024; scheduled for delivery in 2025-2028	541.98 million (11 vessels)	Seaspray Police Launch
Small Boat Divisional Disguised Craft	LOA: 7.9 metres OMS: 2 crew Speed: minimum 40 knots	Contract signed in the second quarter of 2023 and delivered in the fourth quarter of the same year	1.53 million (1 vessel)	Confiscated Speedboat
Divisional Fast Patrol Craft Mark IV	LOA: 10.5-12 metres OMS: 4 crew Speed: minimum 55 knots	Invitation to Tender gazetted in the fourth quarter of 2023; contract expected to be signed in the fourth quarter of 2024; scheduled for delivery in 2026-2028	265.94 million (12 vessels)	Divisional Fast Patrol Craft Mark I and II
Medium Patrol Launch Mark II	LOA: 16-20 metres OMS: 5 crew Speed: minimum 45 knots	Invitation to Tender expected to be gazetted in the second quarter of 2024; scheduled for delivery in 2027-2028	1,496.61 million (12 vessels)	Inshore Patrol Launch (6 vessels) and Medium Patrol Launch (6 vessels)
Personal Watercraft	LOA: 3.5-3.7 metres OMS: 2 crew Speed: minimum 35 knots	Quotation invitation expected to be issued in the third quarter of 2024; scheduled for delivery in 2025	4.51 million	Newly procured item

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0027)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The number of online deception cases has surged abruptly in recent years, some involving amounts exceeding \$10 million. Despite the launch of the Police's anti-scam mobile app "Scameter+", the number of victims continues to rise. Not only have the elderly but also well-educated groups, including professionals, have fallen prey to these frauds. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) the manpower and expenditure dedicated by the Police to prevent and detect online deception cases for the past 5 years;
- 2) the total number of online deception cases detected by the Police, categorised by type of crime (e.g. e-shopping fraud, online investment fraud, online employment fraud, online gaming fraud, etc.), along with the amounts involved and the number of victims for each of the past 5 years; and
- 3) whether online gaming fraud employs different scam tactics, the details of each tactic and the Police's strategies to combat such fraud.

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

- 1) "Enhancing cyber security and combating technology crime" remains one of the Commissioner's Operational Priorities (COP) in 2024 and "combating quick cash crime" of the COP 2023 has been amended to "combating deception and quick cash crime". The Police Force has been taking proactive measures on all fronts to combat deception and technology crimes. The Commercial Crime Bureau (CCB) and its Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC), the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB), the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau and the crime investigation units of various Police Regions and Districts are all dedicated to cracking down on scams and technology-related crimes.

To further enhance its capabilities in combating related crimes, the Force established the e-Crime Processing and Analysis Hub (e-Hub), a one-stop platform for handling electronic reports on technology crimes and deceptions, in September 2022. The e-Hub conducts correlation analysis on cases through an enhanced computer system to

identify relevant clusters of cases for consolidated investigation, with a view to focusing resources on following up the cases in a more efficient and effective manner, thereby enhancing the Force’s effectiveness in handling technology crimes and deceptions.

As various formations of the Force are involved in combating online deception and other types of crime, a separate breakdown of the manpower involved is not available. ADCC and the e-Hub are mainly tasked with combating online deception. For ADCC, the staff establishment has grown in each of the past 5 years: from 26 in 2019-20 to 49 in 2022-23, with 32 being permanent establishment and 17 on secondment from different Force formations. In 2023-24, the ADCC’s staff establishment expanded further to 90, with permanent establishment increasing by 5 to 37, and the remainder filled by 53 officers on secondment or Post-retirement Service Contracts. Meanwhile, the establishment of the e-Hub will expand from 26 since its inception to 28. Of these, 1 is a permanent post and the remainder are filled by officers on secondment from different Force formations. The Force will review the manpower and resources of various formations and adjust the establishment from time to time.

The expenditures for the CCB, ADCC, CSTCB, e-Hub and crime investigation units of various Police Regions and Districts form part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) “Prevention and Detection of Crime”. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditures involved.

- 2) The common types of online deception reported to the Force as well as the amount involved for each of the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

	Number of cases				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Online Deception	5 157	10 716	13 859	19 599	27 314
Common types of online scam					
E-shopping Fraud	2 194	6 678	6 120	8 735	8 950
Online Investment Fraud	167	544	980	1 884	5 105
Phishing Scam (Note)					4 322
Online Employment Fraud	66	236	1 063	2 884	3 518
Social Media Deception	1 678	1 988	3 638	3 605	3 372
Email Scam	816	767	549	391	208

	Amount of losses (HK\$ million)				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Online Deception	2,902.0	2,945.6	2,965.8	3,073.8	5,345.9
Common types of online scam					
E-shopping Fraud	27.3	122.3	71.5	74.1	190.5
Online Investment Fraud	48.6	266.3	472.0	926.5	3,267.4
Phishing Scam (Note)					102.4
Online Employment Fraud	2.8	10.5	85.3	459.1	760.2
Social Media Deception	261.9	259.1	669.4	779.0	745.4
Email Scam	2,535.5	2,247.4	1,538.8	751.1	163.6

(Note) Figures related to phishing scam have been maintained by the Force since January 2023.

The Force does not maintain any breakdowns on the numbers of victims and cases detected by the above-mentioned types of online deception.

- 3) Fraudsters involved in online betting scams typically approach victims through social media platforms or uninvited messages. Victims are then enticed to place bets on fraudulent online betting platforms, where they are asked to deposit funds into designated bank accounts to top up their bets. Regardless of the gambling results, victims are unable to withdraw any money.

The Force has all along spared no effort in combating all types of fraud, employing enhanced law enforcement measures, publicity and education, multi-agency cooperation, intelligence analysis and cross-boundary collaboration. In terms of publicity and education, the Force has implemented an extensive publicity strategy and disseminated anti-deception messages through multiple channels to enhance the public's anti-deception awareness. The Police also encouraged the public to proactively report scams by using the round-the-clock enquiry hotline "Anti-Scam Helpline 18222", "Scameter" and "Scameter+".

In November 2023, the Faster Payment System (FPS) Suspicious Proxy ID Alert was launched, connecting the FPS platform to the "Scameter" database. During online fund transfer via FPS, the matching function of the database can identify payees whose information is related to scam reports, and an alert message will appear on the confirmation page. By 31 January 2024, this mechanism had issued over 264 000 alerts, flagging high-risk transfers totaling nearly \$410 million. The Force will continue to step up publicity and implement such mechanism in other platforms.

In late November last year, the Force collaborated with 10 major banks in establishing the Anti-Deception Alliance (ADA), where bank representatives are deployed to work in the Police Headquarters to provide more direct and instant communication and assistance in intercepting fraudulent payments and issuing alerts. Since its official launch on 27 November 2023 until the end of January 2024, 95% of payment interception requests has been responded by banks within 2 hours, markedly improving efficiency. In respect of upstream scam intervention, the ADA has proactively prevented 162 persons from making further transfers to fraudsters by the end of January. The number of successful interventions rose from a daily average of 1.2 cases before the ADA's establishment to 3.5 cases in January 2024, marking a 1.9-fold increase.

In February 2024, automation elements were incorporated in "Scameter+", enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich the database, a public "reporting" mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application.

The Force will continue to closely monitor the trend of fraud cases and review fraud combating measures and strategies from time to time, so as to enhance protection for the public.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0066)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under this Programme, it is mentioned that the Hong Kong Police Force will, among others, utilise social media platforms to disseminate crime prevention messages to the public. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the Police Force's expenditure and manpower involved in related work and its effectiveness in 2023-24, the estimated expenditure and manpower to be involved in related work in 2024-25, as well as any specific plans and new measures, particularly those aimed at combating online scams, to disseminate crime prevention messages on social media platforms.

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

The Police Force has been utilising social media platforms to disseminate crime prevention messages to the public. These platforms are mainly managed by the Multi-media Communication Division of the Public Relations Wing, which is currently led by 1 Superintendent and staffed with an additional 27 police officers and 2 contract staff members who are responsible for managing the Force's social media platforms. This Division conducts live broadcasts at large-scale events or operations and provides support to other Force formations as necessary.

In light of the latest crime trends, the Force has produced crime prevention videos and posts for social media to disseminate anti-deception and anti-crime messages in a simple and lively way, with the aims of raising awareness of crime prevention among people of all ages and levels, as well as interacting with the public in the fight against crime.

In 2023-24, the Force leveraged social media to launch various thematic anti-deception and anti-crime campaigns, including "Anti-Drugs Month", "Child Protection Month", "Anti-Money Laundering Month", "Anti-Deception Month" and "All-Round CyberDefence". These activities were organised both online and offline, along with conventional media and support of key opinion leaders on the Internet, to ensure a wider public reach and better publicity.

To help the public identify scams and online pitfalls, the Force has widely promoted anti-deception and anti-crime messages as well as useful tools such as “Scameter+” with 3 new functions and “Faster Payment System Suspicious Proxy ID Alert” through various social media and channels. These efforts aim to enable the public to promptly assess deception risks and obtain fraud-related information, thereby raising public awareness against deception.

In 2023, the Force expanded its social media presence by launching 3 new official accounts: the Hong Kong Police WhatsApp Channels in June, the Xiaohongshu account in October, and the Douyin account in November. In addition to YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Weibo, X (formerly known as Twitter) and WeChat, the Force now operates a total of 9 social media channels. A total of 5 472 posts were published across these platforms in 2023, attracting over 5.75 million followers by 5 March 2024. This growth indicates effective engagement and dissemination of the Force’s anti-deception and anti-crime messaging.

In 2024-25, the Force intends to bolster communication with the public through various social media platforms, enhancing their understanding of police work. In addition, it will keep abreast of the times by reviewing developments in the mass and social media, and will disseminate information via more emerging platforms when necessary. In the coming financial year, the Force will continue to deploy existing manpower and resources for managing the social media platforms. The expenditure to be involved falls under the Programme of “Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community”, and no specific breakdown is available.

The Force will continue to step up its publicity efforts to provide the public with information on deception and crime prevention through various channels. The effectiveness of publicity campaigns will be reviewed in a timely manner. To better deter deception and prevent crime, the Force will also strengthen collaboration with stakeholders to promote anti-deception and crime prevention for all.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB089

(Question Serial No. 0067)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under this Programme that the Hong Kong Police Force will, among others, enhance its capability in tackling technology crime and financial investigation. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the expenditure and manpower involved as well as its effectiveness for 2023-24. Please also advise on the estimated expenditure and manpower to be involved, the respective plans, and whether additional manpower, training and new equipment will be required for enhancing the Force's capability in tackling technology crime and financial investigation in the coming 2024-25; if so, the details.

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

The Police Force is committed to taking proactive measures to combat technology crime and money laundering activities, primarily through the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB) and the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau (FIIB).

In 2023-24, the establishment of CSTCB and FIIB comprise police officers of ranks ranging from Police Constable to Chief Superintendent, with 395 and 217 officers (including 1 supernumerary post of Chief Superintendent) respectively. In 2024-25, the establishment of police officers in CSTCB will increase by 8, while that of FIIB will remain unchanged. The estimated expenditure for these 2 formations forms part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

Enhancing cyber security and combating technology crime are among Commissioner's Operational Priorities in 2024. The Force will continue to enhance its capability in combating technology crimes and handling cyber security incidents, as well as stepping up collaboration, intelligence exchange and law enforcement with relevant stakeholders and law enforcement agencies, such as the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Hong Kong Productivity Council. In addition, the Cybercrime Policing Advisory Panel (CPAP) of the CSTCB was set up in December 2022, comprising 12 panel members who are

experts and leaders from the academia, the education sector, commercial chambers, the financial sector, the information technology sector, the telecommunications sector and various public entities. The CPAP assists the Force in formulating short, medium and long term strategic directions in order to strengthen the Force's digital policing capabilities in combating cybercrimes. As of December 2023, 4 meetings had been convened by the CPAP.

On another front, the CSTCB hosted the International Symposium on Cyber Policing in September 2023. The event was attended by over 200 individuals, including 110 senior law enforcement officers, members, experts and academics from the Mainland, Macao, INTERPOL and 35 overseas countries, along with approximately 100 local working partners of the Force. During the symposium, 18 distinguished scholars from renowned universities and experts from the cyber technology industry, specialising in digital finance, communications technology, and cybersecurity, were invited to deliver keynote speeches and lead panel discussions for in-depth exploration into issues related to cyber policing. The symposium not only provided a platform for international law enforcement and public and private organisations to exchange insights but also fostered international collaboration in policing to better tackle the evolving trends of cybercrime in the context of globalisation. Additionally, the CSTCB has regularly conducted training programs to bolster police officers' expertise in handling technology crime, with two courses accredited at Level 4 and one at Level 5 of the Qualifications Framework respectively.

Meanwhile, the Force has been strengthening its professional capability in financial intelligence analysis and financial investigations, including the founding of the Money Laundering Expert Cadre in October 2022, a volunteer secondary duty cadre with currently more than 50 officers to assist the frontline in investigating money laundering cases and to testify as expert witnesses in court hearings. With FIIB's Financial Data Analytic Platform, funded by a \$698 million allocation from the Legislative Council and incrementally implemented since 2023, the financial intelligence system's analytical capabilities have been significantly enhanced through advanced technologies and big data analytics tools. To combat money laundering, the Force will continue to enhance the knowledge and techniques of police officers and the industry stakeholders in financial investigation by consistently offering local and international courses, as well as refining the mechanism for collaborating with local financial institutions, international organisations and law enforcement agencies from the Mainland and abroad.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB090

(Question Serial No. 0069)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Road Safety

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under this Programme, it is mentioned that the Hong Kong Police Force will, among others, examine with relevant agencies and government departments on using closed-circuit television cameras for traffic enforcement. Please provide this Committee with an update on the current progress of the project, along with relevant details, and information on the specific work plans, the implementation timetable, as well as the estimated expenditure and manpower to be involved.

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The Police Force is currently engaging in studies and discussions with the Transport Department on using closed-circuit television cameras for traffic enforcement, focusing on details such as technical improvement, workflow and resources. More information will be released in due course when the details are finalised.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB091

(Question Serial No. 0716)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community
(2) Prevention and Detection of Crime

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Section 4C of the Summary Offences Ordinance (Cap. 228) requires that a performance licence (permit) shall be obtained in advance for a dragon/lion dance activity. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

(a) the number of applications for permits received by the Police Force and the respective results (e.g. permit issued/application rejected) in each of the past 3 years; and for the applications rejected, the justifications of the Police;

(b) in respect of the activities for which permits were issued in the past 3 years, whether there were illegal acts which breached the conditions of the permit when such activities were conducted; if so, the details and how these cases were handled;

(c) the number of cases in which the dragon/lion dance activities were carried out without licence (including the number of law enforcement actions taken and complaints received) in each of the past 3 years; and the respective results (including a breakdown by the number of persons arrested, prosecuted and convicted, and the penalties imposed, etc.); and

(d) in respect of the Government's Licensing E-Service launched in September 2020 that enables organisers to apply for permits and submit required documents through Police's public website and save time from queuing and submitting applications at report rooms, please provide details on the application and handling processes, including the number of application, processing time and workflow.

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

(a) The number of applications for dragon/lion dance permits (permits) received by the Police Force in each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of applications for permits	Number of permits issued	Number of exemptions granted	Number of applications objected
2021	133	4	0	21
2022	270	71	17	8
2023	1 389	1 198	52	2

Note: Since the figures are based on the dates when applications are received/permits are issued/applications are objected, the sum of the numbers of permits issued, exemptions granted and applications objected may not equal to the total number of applications for permits in the same year.

There are established procedures and guidelines in the Force for processing permit applications. Each and every application is considered in a holistic manner to determine whether a permit should be issued. The Force will consider an array of relevant factors, including the venue, time and nature of the activity being organised, the impact on traffic and residents, the background of the organiser and its past record, and whether the activity will be used for illegal purposes. If it is satisfied that the activity will not involve lawbreakers and will not jeopardise public order and public safety, a permit will be issued with appropriate conditions for the organiser to follow in managing the dragon/lion dance activity. The Force has put in place an exemption mechanism to grant exemptions for activities that do not involve illegal acts or have no impact on public order, such as those organised by the Government or schools.

- (b)&(c) The Force does not maintain statistics on breaches of permit conditions or cases of dragon/lion dance activities performed without a licence. If violations of permit conditions are identified, the Force will take appropriate enforcement action based on the facts of individual case.
- (d) In September 2020, the Force rolled out Licensing E-service, allowing applicants to apply for permits and submit necessary documents via the Police Public Page and save time from queuing and submitting applications at report rooms.

The number of permit applications submitted through Licensing E-service since September 2020 is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of applications
2020 (from September to December)	3
2021	67
2022	160
2023	601
2024 (from January to February)	589

The performance pledge for processing a permit application is 14 working days.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB092

(Question Serial No. 2372)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The number of deception cases in Hong Kong has continuously hit record highs in recent years. Despite the Police Force's efforts to raise the public's anti-deception awareness through frequent updates on social media and posters across the city, telephone scam remains prevalent, with even highly educated or professional individuals falling victim to scammers using "old tricks in new ways". In 2017, the Police established the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC) to specifically combat deception and co-ordinate the publicity efforts of all relevant departments in fighting the crime. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The number of deception cases, number of victims, amounts involved, as well as the numbers of cases detected and persons arrested for the past 3 financial years, with a breakdown by type of crime (e.g. telephone scam, online scam, etc.);
2. In tabular form, the number of deception cases involving multi-level marketing and fraudulent financial intermediaries, the amount involved, as well as the numbers of cases detected and persons arrested for the past 3 financial years;
3. In light of the increasingly rampant online scams, whether additional manpower and resources will be solicited for the ADCC in 3 key areas, namely, intelligence sharing and law enforcement, cross-agency collaboration, as well as publicity and education, so as to prevent deception, strengthen law enforcement, intercept fraudulent funds and raise public awareness of anti-deception; if so, the details; if not, the reason(s);
4. The number of deceptions and frauds related to electronic consumption vouchers last year reported to the Police and the total amounts involved and; among them, the number of cases involving theft of personal data for the collection of vouchers or cashing out vouchers at a discount;
5. Since the implementation of the Top Talent Pass Scheme on 28 December 2022, approximately 70 000 applications have been received with 55 000 approvals. Of the approved applicants, around 40 000 talents have since arrived in Hong Kong. Furthermore,

by the end of last year, over 50 000 dependants had been approved to join them, with more than 30 000 having arrived. The influx of these talents and their dependants is significant. However, concerns have been raised that many talents may hesitate to seek police assistance immediately after falling prey to scammers due to potential language barriers. In this regard, please advise whether the Police has any plans to collaborate with the Hong Kong Talent Engage to enhance anti-deception publicity efforts tailored to the “Hong Kong drifters”, so as to extend the reach of such campaigns and heighten the newcomers’ alertness to deception;

6. Whether the Police will consider introducing a “one-touch” emergency function on its WeChat official account to facilitate new talents in reporting deception crimes or other cases directly; and

7. Whether the Police will explore the use of artificial intelligence to develop “digital police officers” to improve communication with new arrivals.

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

- The number of deceptions and frauds reported to the Police Force, the detection rate, the amount involved and the number of persons arrested for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Number of cases	19 249	27 923	39 824
Detection rate	10.6%	12.0%	11.9%
Amount involved (HK\$)	Over 6.4 billion	Over 4.8 billion	9.18 billion
Number of persons arrested	2 835	4 112	7 043

The common types of deception and fraud reported to the Force as well as the amount involved for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	Number of cases			Amount of losses (HK\$ million)		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Online Deception	13 859	19 599	27 314	2,965.8	3,073.8	5,345.9
Common types of online scam						
E-shopping Fraud	6 120	8 735	8 950	71.5	74.1	190.5
Online Investment Fraud	980	1 884	5 105	472.0	926.5	3,267.4
Phishing Scam (Note)			4 322			102.4
Online Employment Fraud	1 063	2 884	3 518	85.3	459.1	760.2
Social Media Deception	3 638	3 605	3 372	669.4	779.0	745.4
Email Scam	549	391	208	1,538.8	751.1	163.6
Telephone Deception	1 140	2 831	3 213	811.1	1,076.5	1,102.8
Guess Who	497	1 540	2 237	27.5	114.1	188.7
Pretend Officials	641	1 290	969	783.5	962.3	913.8
Detained Son	2	1	7	0.1	0.07	0.3

(Note) Figures related to phishing scam have been maintained by the Force since 2023.

The Force does not maintain any breakdowns of the numbers of victims and cases detected by the above-mentioned types of deception and fraud.

2. The number of deceptions and frauds reported to the Force involving financial intermediaries, the number of cases detected, the amount of losses and the number of persons arrested for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Number of cases	148	95	66
Number of cases detected	26	18	6
Amount of losses (HK\$ million)	43.2	38.5	21
Number of persons arrested	182	59	82

No cases of deception and fraud involving multi-level marketing practices has been reported to the Force in the past 3 years.

3. “Enhancing cyber security and combating technology crime” remains one of the Commissioner’s Operational Priorities (COP) in 2024 and “combating quick cash crime” of the COP 2023 has been amended to “combating deception and quick cash crime”. The Force has been taking proactive measures on all fronts to combat deception and technology crimes. The Commercial Crime Bureau (CCB) and its Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC), the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB), the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau and the crime investigation units of various Police Regions and Districts are all dedicated to cracking down on scams and technology-related crimes.

Deception syndicates utilise a multitude of stooge accounts to collect fraudulent payments and launder money. Therefore, targeting stooge accounts is a vital strategy in dismantling the fraud industry chain. In 2023, the Force arrested a total of 9 239 persons for involvement in various types of deception and money laundering offences, representing an increase of over 75% compared to 2022. Among these, about 6 500 were stooge account holders. The Force has reached a consensus with the Department of Justice to enhance evidence gathering and prosecution procedures for relatively simple and straightforward money laundering cases involving stooge accounts and to expedite prosecution. Moreover, the Force will continue to apply to the court for enhanced sentencing and has, since 2023, achieved a 20% increase in the sentences of 4 stooge account holders, leading to imprisonment terms ranging from 26 to 38 months.

In collaboration with stakeholders, the Force is committed to leveraging technology in the fight against deception. Since the establishment of a collaborative working group with the Office of the Communications Authority and telecommunications service providers, several initiatives have been implemented. Apart from blocking spoofed calls originating from outside local regions with the prefix “+852”, and sending text or voice alerts to users when they receive such calls, mobile network operators have blocked or filtered over 7 600 websites and nearly 3 200 telephone numbers associated with deception cases by January 2024. On the technical front, telecommunications service providers also proactively identify and block a significant volume of calls made using technical devices and suspend related services.

Last year, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the banking industry, the Force introduced various anti-deception measures. Notably, in November, the Faster Payment System (FPS) Suspicious Proxy ID Alert was launched, connecting the FPS platform to the “Scameter” database. During online fund transfer via FPS, the matching function of the database can identify payees whose information is related to scam reports, and an alert message will appear on the confirmation page. By 31 January 2024, this mechanism had issued over 264 000 alerts, flagging high-risk transfers totaling nearly \$410 million. The Force will continue to step up publicity and implement such mechanism in other platforms.

In late November last year, the Force collaborated with 10 major banks in establishing the Anti-Deception Alliance (ADA), where bank representatives are deployed to work in the Police Headquarters to provide more direct and instant communication and assistance in intercepting fraudulent payments and issuing alerts. Since its official launch on 27 November 2023 until the end of January 2024, 95% of payment interception requests has been responded by banks within 2 hours, markedly improving efficiency. In respect of upstream scam intervention, the ADA has proactively prevented 162 persons from making further transfers to fraudsters by the end of January. For intercepting fraud proceeds, the ADCC continues to assist in minimising victims’ losses, intercepting over \$12.5 billion worth of fraud proceed since its inception until the end of last year.

The CSTCB launched a one-stop scam and pitfall search engine “Scameter” in September 2022 and launched the mobile application version “Scameter+” in February 2023. As at 31 January 2024, “Scameter+” has been downloaded more than 228 000 times, while the search engine has recorded over 2.3 million searches and issued approximately 400 000 alerts on frauds and cyber security risks. In February 2024, automation elements were incorporated in “Scameter+”, enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich the database, a public “reporting” mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application.

The Force will continue to place emphasis on combating deception cases. In addition to stepping up enforcement and enhancing prosecution efficiency, the Force will rigorously combat the use of stooge accounts by deception syndicates in committing crimes through applications for enhanced sentencing. Approaches such as interception of fraudulent payments and upstream scam intervention will be adopted to minimise victims’ losses. Furthermore, the Force will continue to raise anti-deception awareness of members of the public through online and offline publicity and actively seek to maintain close cooperation with stakeholders from various sectors, relevant government departments and other law enforcement agencies, including those in the Mainland and overseas, so as to create synergy in combating deception cases.

Regarding the ADCC’s manpower, its staff establishment has grown over the past 5 years, from 26 in 2019-20 to 49 in 2022-23, with 32 being permanent establishment and 17 on secondment from different Force formations. In 2023-24, the ADCC’s staff establishment expanded further to 90, with permanent establishment increasing by 5 to 37, and the remainder filled by 53 officers on secondment or Post-retirement Service

Contracts. The Force will review the manpower and resources of various formations and adjust the establishment from time to time.

4. In 2023, the Force received reports of 108 cases related to consumption vouchers, involving crime proceeds totaling \$231,500. All these cases involved the fraudulent use of personal data to impersonate another to collect the vouchers. The CCB will maintain close contact with the Secretariat of the Consumption Voucher Scheme and the operators of stored value facilities, so as to exchange information and take timely follow-up actions and law enforcement actions as appropriate.
- 5-7. To raise anti-scam awareness among new arrivals from the Mainland, the ADCC held an anti-deception seminar on the latest deception trends in February last year for around 1 000 Mainland students from 14 tertiary institutions. The Force has also launched an account on Xiaohongshu to broaden its anti-scam outreach using online platforms. In September, the ADCC introduced e-learning packages tailored for Mainland students newly admitted to universities in Hong Kong, featuring a quiz with about 50 questions on the latest common fraud tactics to enhance their understanding of scam prevention. From its roll-out through the end of January 2024, the e-learning programme has been completed by over 2 500 students. The Force will continue to encourage the universities to distribute these resources to all their students.

Furthermore, in January 2024, Regional Crime Prevention Office of the New Territories North and the Hong Kong Top Talent Services Association co-hosted an anti-deception webinar for top talents, informing them of common fraud tactics in Hong Kong and aiming to reduce their risk of being scammed. The event attracted over 2 000 participants from various cities.

The Force is actively exploring different platforms to extend the reach of anti-deception information. In February 2024, it began releasing latest scam alerts and anti-deception messages on the WeChat account of Gter.net, a popular exchange platform among Mainland students, assisting them in preparing for their arrival in Hong Kong. Concurrently, the Force maintains close liaison with the Hong Kong Mainland Students Association and its 18 divisions across 11 local universities, disseminating the latest scam alerts through various student networks.

The Force has been adopting a multi-agency approach to heighten public alertness to different types of deception by collaborating with other government departments, regulatory agencies and industry stakeholders, and by organising large-scale thematic crime prevention activities, etc. The Force remains dedicated to exploring advanced technological applications in the fight against deception.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB093

(Question Serial No. 0163)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the recent public complaints about receiving spam messages promoting online illegal gambling via mobile messaging and social media apps, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The number of online illegal gambling cases detected and the number of suspects arrested by the Police for each of the past 3 years;
2. Whether the Police have deployed manpower to monitor and intercept such messages for the past 2 years; if so, the details and the expenditure involved; and
3. Whether the current practices will be reviewed to strengthen measures against the promotion of online illegal gambling via messaging apps by illegal syndicates.

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

1. The number of persons arrested by the Police Force in relation to illegal gambling offences (e.g. serious gambling and various offences such as operating or managing an unlawful gambling establishment, bookmaking, gambling in a gambling establishment, gambling in a street etc, as well as online illegal gambling) for each of the past 3 years is set out below:

	Number of persons arrested
2021	5 731
2022	6 781
2023	6 101

The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the number of cases and number of persons arrested in relation to online illegal gambling.

2.-3. The Force has been conducting proactive online patrols. If illegal or inappropriate content is identified on the Internet, the Force will contact the relevant platforms to request the removal of such content and take appropriate action. The Force has been adopting a multi-agency approach to maintain effective communication mechanisms with social media platforms. When crime-related information is found on a social media platform, the Force will proactively engage with the platform to prevent its use as a medium or tool for crime. In 2023, the Force requested the removal or review of over 12 000 pages or accounts related to frauds from various social media platforms, including online illegal gambling websites.

The expenditures for the above initiatives form part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditures involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB094

(Question Serial No. 1896)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

According to figures previously released by the Police Force, the number of online and telephone scams reported has doubled in recent years, with the total amount of money involved in the first 9 months of last year exceeding \$4.4 billion. In light of this escalating trend, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The indicators used for detecting online and telephone scams for the past 3 years and the current year;
2. Detailed information regarding the expenditures and specific measures as mentioned in paragraph 11 under this Programme, where the Force will continue to enhance its capability in tackling technology crime and financial investigation;
3. Following the implementation of the Short Message Service (SMS) Sender Registration Scheme at the end of last year, which allows participating companies or organisations to send messages using “#” in the ID to help the public verify the sender and reduce the risk of SMS scams, whether the Police will consider conducting further study on establishing a voluntary registration scheme for a “white list for incoming calls”. Such a scheme would encourage telecommunications service providers, banks, government departments and businesses to be included in a database enabling the public’s mobile phones to automatically display the name of the registered organisation when receiving a call from a number on the “white list”. If considered, the details; if not, the reason(s);
4. As relayed by members of the public, mobile apps designed to block telemarketing calls are currently available on the market. These technologies could potentially be used to compile a “white list” of incoming calls. In this connection, will the Police consider collaborating with technology-related government departments and public bodies to develop a mobile app for identifying and verifying callers on the “white list”, or to enhance the functions of “Scameter+”? If so, the details; if not, the reason(s).
5. Taking inspiration from the banking sector, which initiates a verification process known as KYC (Know Your Customer) during suspicious transactions, such as large-value fund

transfers, will the Police consider adopting a similar approach and enhancing collaboration with the telecommunications sector? This would aim to proactively combat the actions of suspicious users who persistently make telephone calls, thus strengthening the capability to prevent and combat deception. If so, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

1. The number of deceptions and frauds reported to the Police Force, the detection rate, the amount involved and the number of persons arrested for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Number of cases	19 249	27 923	39 824
Detection rate	10.6%	12.0%	11.9%
Amount involved (HK\$)	Over 6.4 billion	Over 4.8 billion	9.18 billion
Number of persons arrested	2 835	4 112	7 043

Deception syndicates utilise a multitude of stooze accounts to collect fraudulent payments and launder money. Therefore, targeting stooze accounts is a vital strategy in dismantling the fraud industry chain. In 2023, the Force arrested a total of 9 239 persons for involvement in various types of deception and money laundering offences, representing an increase of over 75% compared to 2022. Among these, about 6 500 were stooze account holders. The Force has reached a consensus with the Department of Justice to enhance evidence gathering and prosecution procedures for relatively simple and straightforward money laundering cases involving stooze accounts and to expedite prosecution. Moreover, the Force will continue to apply to the court for enhanced sentencing and has, since 2023, achieved a 20% increase in the sentences of 4 stooze account holders, leading to imprisonment terms ranging from 26 to 38 months.

In addition to stepping up enforcement and enhancing prosecution efficiency, the Force will rigorously combat the use of stooze accounts by deception syndicates in committing crimes through applications for enhanced sentencing. Approaches such as interception of fraudulent payments and upstream scam intervention will be adopted to minimise victims' losses. Furthermore, the Force will continue to raise anti-deception awareness of members of the public through online and offline publicity and actively seek to maintain close cooperation with stakeholders from various sectors, relevant government departments and other law enforcement agencies, including those in the Mainland and overseas, so as to create synergy in combating deception cases.

2. The Force is committed to taking proactive measures to combat technology crime and money laundering activities, primarily through the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB) and the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau (FIIB).

In 2023-24, the establishment of CSTCB and FIIB comprise police officers of ranks ranging from Police Constable to Chief Superintendent, with 395 and 217 officers (including 1 supernumerary post of Chief Superintendent) respectively. In 2024-25, the establishment of police officers in CSTCB will increase by 8, while that of FIIB will remain unchanged. The estimated expenditure for these 2 formations forms part of the

total expenditure under Programme (2) “Prevention and Detection of Crime”. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

On technology crime, “enhancing cyber security and combating technology crime” is among Commissioner’s Operational Priorities in 2024. The Force will continue to enhance its capability in combating technology crimes and handling cyber security incidents, as well as stepping up collaboration, intelligence exchange and law enforcement with relevant stakeholders and law enforcement agencies, such as the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Hong Kong Productivity Council. In addition, the Cybercrime Policing Advisory Panel (CPAP) of the CSTCB was set up in December 2022, comprising 12 panel members who are experts and leaders from the academia, the education sector, commercial chambers, the financial sector, the information technology sector, the telecommunications sector and various public entities. The CPAP assists the Force in formulating short, medium and long term strategic directions in order to strengthen the Force’s digital policing capabilities in combating cybercrimes. As of December 2023, 4 meetings had been convened by the CPAP.

On another front, the CSTCB hosted the International Symposium on Cyber Policing in September 2023. The event was attended by over 200 individuals, including 110 senior law enforcement officers, members, experts and academics from the Mainland, Macao, International Criminal Police Organisation and 35 overseas countries, along with approximately 100 local working partners of the Force. During the symposium, 18 distinguished scholars from renowned universities and experts from the cyber technology industry, specialising in digital finance, communications technology, and cybersecurity, were invited to deliver keynote speeches and lead panel discussions for in-depth exploration into issues related to cyber policing. The symposium not only provided a platform for international law enforcement and public and private organisations to exchange insights but also fostered international collaboration in policing to better tackle the growing trend of cybercrime in an increasingly globalised world. Additionally, the CSTCB has regularly conducted training programmes to bolster police officers’ expertise in handling technology crime, with two courses accredited at Level 4 and one at Level 5 of the Qualifications Framework respectively.

On financial investigation, the Force has been strengthening its professional capability in financial intelligence analysis and financial investigations, including the founding of the Money Laundering Expert Cadre in October 2022, a volunteer secondary duty cadre with currently more than 50 officers to assist the frontline in investigating money laundering cases and to testify as expert witnesses in court hearings. FIIB’s Financial Data Analytic Platform, funded by a provision of \$698 million approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council, was rolled out by phase since 2023 to strengthen the financial intelligence system’s analytical capabilities through advanced technologies and big data analytics tools. To combat money laundering, the Force will continue to enhance the knowledge and techniques of police officers and the industry stakeholders in financial investigation by consistently offering local and international courses, as well as refining the mechanism for collaborating with local financial institutions, international organisations and law enforcement agencies from the Mainland and abroad.

3-5. To facilitate the crackdown on scam-related calls and messages, a working group was established in September 2022 by the Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA), the Force and major telecommunications service providers. A series of initiatives have been implemented to address the problem at its source. Apart from blocking spoofed calls originating from outside local regions with the prefix “+852”, and sending text or voice alerts to users when they receive such calls, telecommunications service providers have blocked or filtered over 7 600 websites and nearly 3 200 telephone numbers associated with deception cases by January 2024. On the technical front, telecommunications service providers also proactively identify and block a significant volume of calls made using technical devices and suspend related services.

To further assist the public in verifying the identities of SMS senders and increase their awareness of deception so as to prevent telephone and SMS fraud, the Government implemented the Short Message Service (SMS) Sender Registration Scheme (the Scheme) in December 2023. Under the Scheme, all participating companies or organisations will use “Registered SMS Sender IDs” with the prefix “#” when sending SMS messages to local mobile service subscribers. Since February 2024, the Scheme has been open for applications from all sectors, including government departments. As at the end of February 2024, major telecommunications service providers, banks and 11 government departments or statutory entities that use SMS for public communication have successively joined the Scheme.

Meanwhile, in February 2024, automation elements were incorporated in “Scameter+”, enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich the database of “Scameter”, a public “reporting” mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application. The Force will review and update the database periodically to ensure that the data remain accurate and up-to-date.

Following the introduction of the above initiatives, the average number of telephone deception cases reported in the fourth quarter of 2023 decreased by 38.1% when compared to the same period in 2022. This suggests that these measures have had a positive impact on reducing telephone deception cases. The Force remains dedicated to exploring advanced technological applications in the fight against deception.

Regarding the establishment of a voluntary registration system for a “whitelist of incoming calls”, modelled after the Scheme as proposed in the question, OFCA has noted that such a whitelist would require frequent updates to ensure that members of the public do not miss important calls due to potential omissions or errors. Furthermore, the design of the calling number display technology, which follows a set of internationally recognised formats, generally does not support the display of signs and text other than numbers, making the suggestion technically unfeasible at this stage. However, if individual government departments or public entities deem it necessary to use special phone numbers for public communication, such as the Hong Kong SAR Government’s enquiry hotline 1823 and the Police Force’s Anti-Scam Helpline 18222, OFCA is committed to providing proactive support and assistance. OFCA will also continue to encourage various government departments and public organisations to seek its assistance in acquiring phone numbers that begin with specific digits for public

communication purposes. This will aid members of the public in identifying calls from government departments and public entities.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB095

(Question Serial No. 1216)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Road Safety

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

It is mentioned that one of the duties of the Police Force is to work closely with relevant agencies and government departments to identify technological solutions to address serious parking offences. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) the respective numbers of fixed penalty tickets (FPTs) for illegal parking, both electronic and handwritten, issued by the Police Force in the 5 Police Regions in each of the past 3 years;
- (b) the number of enforcement actions against illegal road racing conducted and the number of FPTs issued by the Police Force in the 5 Police Regions in each of the past 3 years; and
- (c) regarding the trial scheme on the average speed camera system conducted by the Transport Department which was completed in 2019, the number of speeding cases successfully collected through this trial scheme and whether the scheme will be formally launched; if so, the proposed locations, construction costs and timetable for the installation of the system.

Asked by: Hon TIEN Puk-sun, Michael (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

- (a) The figures on both electronic and handwritten fixed penalty tickets (FPTs) for illegal parking issued by the Police Force under the Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contraventions) Ordinance (Cap. 237) by Police Region for the past 3 years are listed in the following table:

Police Region	Number of FPTs issued for illegal parking					
	2021		2022		2023	
	Handwritten	Electronic	Handwritten	Electronic	Handwritten	Electronic
Hong Kong Island	191 500	497 092	81 520	542 480	21 622	501 545
Kowloon East	195 357	375 109	28 931	526 486	3 509	439 529
Kowloon West	216 708	646 284	76 906	934 178	10 686	949 590
New Territories South	184 200	400 506	52 787	518 108	11 655	459 872
New Territories North	147 737	447 667	47 929	554 146	10 318	604 693
Total	935 502	2 366 658	288 073	3 075 398	57 790	2 955 229

- (b) The enforcement figures on speeding handled by the Force in 2021, 2022 and 2023 are 266 333, 265 283 and 253 571 cases respectively. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the figures on prosecutions for illegal road racing.

The figures on enforcement actions taken by the Force against speeding by Police Region for the past 3 years are listed in the following table:

Police Region	Enforcement figures on speeding		
	2021	2022	2023
Hong Kong Island	24 563	29 380	19 793
Kowloon East	47 728	43 132	50 576
Kowloon West	49 005	70 508	58 089
New Territories South	50 114	47 211	53 898
New Territories North	94 923	75 052	71 215
Total	266 333	265 283	253 571

- (c) The Force is currently engaging in studies and discussions with the Transport Department on using average speed camera system for traffic enforcement, focusing on details such as system interfacing, technical improvement, workflow and resources. More information will be released in due course when the details are finalised.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB096

(Question Serial No. 1223)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned that the Police Force will, among others, strengthen its response in tackling deceptions and frauds through the e-Crime Processing and Analysis Hub and Anti-Deception Coordination Centre. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The expenditure of the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre as a percentage of the estimate for Programme (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime;
- (b) The number of deceptions and frauds reported and successfully detected as well as the amount of money intercepted over the past year; and
- (c) Regarding the Police's mobile app "Scameter+", well-received by the public for its ability to identify scam calls and websites and to enable prompt reporting of suspicious phone numbers and websites, please provide the latest download count for the app, along with the annual operational and development expenditures.

Asked by: Hon TIEN Puk-sun, Michael (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

- (a) The expenditure of the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC) forms part of the total expenditure under the Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". The Police Force does not maintain the breakdown of the expenditure involved.
- (b) In 2023, 39 824 cases of deception were recorded, with a detection rate of 11.9%. A total of 9 239 persons were arrested for involving in various types of deception cases and committing money laundering offences. This figure represented an increase of more than 75% when compared with the figure for 2022; and among those arrested, about 6 500 persons were stooge account holders. Meanwhile, the ADCC continued to play a role in minimising the victims' losses, intercepting more than \$1.29 billion of fraudulent payments last year.

The Force will continue to place emphasis on combating deception cases. In addition to stepping up enforcement and enhancing prosecution efficiency, the Force will

rigorously combat the use of stooge accounts by deception syndicates in committing crimes through applications for enhanced sentencing. Approaches such as interception of fraudulent payments and upstream scam intervention will be adopted to minimise victims' losses. Furthermore, the Force will continue to raise anti-deception awareness of members of the public through online and offline publicity and actively seek to maintain close cooperation with stakeholders from various sectors, relevant government departments and other law enforcement agencies, including those in the Mainland and overseas, in combating deception cases.

- (c) The Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau launched a one-stop scam and pitfall search engine "Scameter" on the "CyberDefender" website (CyberDefender.hk) in September 2022 and launched the mobile application version "Scameter+" in February 2023, to enable members of the public to identify suspicious online platform accounts, payment accounts, phone numbers, email addresses and URLs, etc, and to provide fraud prevention tips. As at 31 January 2024, "Scameter+" has been downloaded more than 228 000 times, while the search engine has recorded over 2.3 million searches and issued approximately 400 000 alerts on frauds and cyber security risks.

In February 2024, automation elements were incorporated in "Scameter+", enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich the database of the search engine, a public "reporting" mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application. The Force will review and update the database periodically to ensure that the data remain accurate and up-to-date.

The expenditures incurred by "Scameter" and "Scameter+" form part of the total expenditure under the Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB097

(Question Serial No. 1084)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: Not specified
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the estimated expenditure increase for the Police Force's Programmes:

1. Provide a detailed breakdown of the increase in the estimated expenditure for maintenance of law and order in the community and operations (including but not limited to monitoring global and local terrorism trends and regimes on counter-terrorism (CT), and improving CT strategies and action plans).
2. Advise whether the procurement of new weapons and equipment has been considered. If so, provide a detailed breakdown of the related expenditure.

Asked by: Hon TIK Chi-yuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

1. The increase in the estimates under Programme (1) "Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community" and Programme (4) "Operations" for 2024-25 is mainly due to the increased provisions for salaries (including some vacancies expected to be filled in 2024-25) and departmental expenses (including electricity charges, system maintenance charges and cleansing service charges), as well as increased cash flow requirement for capital items (including the replacement and procurement of plant, crafts, vehicles and equipment).
2. To ensure that police officers have more effective equipment to cope with actual operational needs, the Police Force will evaluate operational circumstances and review the operational needs of officers as appropriate, and procure or replace weapons and equipment in accordance with the established policies, procedures and rules. The information on the expenditure for the Force's procurement of various weapons and equipment involves the Force's operational deployment details. It is inappropriate to disclose such information.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB098

(Question Serial No. 1231)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: Part of the question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

1. Recently, the Police Force sought funding support for the installation of new “sky eyes” cameras. Will these cameras be utilised to record evidence of illegal parking?
2. What is the estimated increase in the number of Fixed Penalty Tickets (FPTs) to be issued compared to the last 3 financial years?
3. To prevent the deterioration of police-community relations, special attention is being given to areas with severe shortages of parking spaces and extensive parking restrictions. Will the Police consider directing law enforcement officers to exercise greater humanity and discretion when issuing FPTs, particularly during special festivals and events, provided that it does not compromise road safety or obstruct traffic flow?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. The Government plans to install closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs) in areas with relatively high crime rates and in high-traffic pedestrian locations throughout Hong Kong. The initial phase of CCTV installation aims to prevent and combat crimes, safeguard public security, as well as enhance crime detection and prevention. Currently, the plan does not include using CCTV to record video evidence for illegal parking offences. The Police Force will continually assess the effectiveness of the initiative and will make reference to international enforcement practices to consider if it should be expanded to include other types of enforcement.

2. The number of Fixed Penalty Tickets (FPTs) issued in the past 3 years and the estimated number of FPTs to be issued in 2024 are tabulated as follows:

Number of FPTs issued				
Year	2021	2022	2023	2024 Estimated
Fixed penalty (moving offences)	527 923	545 358	548 670	549 000
Fixed penalty (illegal parking)	3 302 160	3 363 471	3 013 019	3 012 000

3. Road safety is one of the Commissioner’s operational priorities in 2024. The Force has statutory duties to prevent behaviour that endangers lives and property, as well as to control traffic upon public thoroughfares.

The Force is committed to adopting a “result-oriented” enforcement approach when formulating the overall traffic policing strategy, with a view to reducing the number of persons killed and seriously injured in traffic accidents as well as changing the irresponsible behaviour of road users causing obstruction on roads.

During traffic enforcement, the Force adheres to established guidelines while also considering the specific circumstances of individual cases, deploying resources flexibly and taking appropriate control and enforcement actions to enhance road safety.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB099

(Question Serial No. 3035)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Residents of Kowloon East have expressed multiple concerns about the prevalence of prostitution in old districts of Hong Kong, which they report as causing nuisance to the residents in the vicinity and seriously impacting children, adolescents and women in particular. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- (1) the number of anti-vice operations conducted by the Police in Kowloon East last year;
- (2) the total number of persons arrested during the operations for involvement in the prostitution activities, together with a breakdown by nationality, gender and age; and
- (3) the proportion of the Police's estimated expenditure of about \$5.7 billion under Programme 2 for the coming financial year that will be allocated to combat the above-mentioned criminal activities.

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

- (1) The Police Force conducted a total of 98 anti-vice operations in Kowloon East last year.
- (2) A total of 174 persons suspected of engaging in prostitution were arrested during the operations. Of these, 167 arrested females, aged from 24 to 61, were suspected of being involved in "soliciting for an immoral purpose", "breach of condition of stay" and "operating a massage establishment without a licence". The other 7 arrested males, aged from 35 to 65, were suspected of being involved in "keeping a vice establishment" and "living on earnings of prostitution of others". Among the persons arrested, 166 were Chinese (51 holding Hong Kong identity cards, 112 holding two-way permits and 3 being illegal immigrants), 3 were Indonesian and 5 were Thai.

- (3) The expenditure involved forms part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". The Force does not maintain the breakdown of the expenditure involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 3036)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Members of the public have reported a perceived increase in telephone deception cases, noting that various defrauding tactics are being employed. Even with the Real-name Registration Programme for Subscriber Identification Module (SIM) Cards in place, deceptions persist; fraudsters commonly use mobile numbers starting with “9” and “6” — digits frequently used by the general public. There have been complaints that significant public funds allocated to preventing telephone deception have yielded inadequate results. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) The number of telephone deception cases reported, along with the numbers of cases both detected and undetected; the total number of persons arrested, prosecuted, and convicted over the past 3 financial years;
- (2) Further to the above, the total amount involved in these cases, the amount successfully recovered, and the amount yet to be recovered;
- (3) The additional estimated expenditure allocated to combating telephone scams; and whether a key performance indicator (KPI) has been or will be established for this purpose; and
- (4) In light of the rapid advancement of technologies, including the use of artificial intelligence-powered face-swapping technology by fraudsters, which presents significant challenges to the public's ability to stay vigilant, what new measures or enhanced uses of the additional substantial estimated expenditure have been proposed to bolster the fight against such crimes and provide the public with a greater sense of security?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

(1)-(2) The number of deceptions and frauds reported to the Police Force, the detection rate, the amount of losses and the number of persons arrested for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Number of cases	19 249	27 923	39 824
Detection rate	10.6%	12.0%	11.9%
Amount involved (HK\$)	Over 6.4 billion	Over 4.8 billion	9.18 billion
Number of persons arrested	2 835	4 112	7 043

The number of telephone deception cases reported to the Force and the amount of losses for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Number of cases	1 140	2 831	3 213
Amount of losses (HK\$ million)	811.1	1,076.5	1,102.8

Deception syndicates utilise a multitude of stooze accounts to collect fraudulent payments and launder money. Therefore, targeting stooze accounts is a vital strategy in dismantling the fraud industry chain, which includes activities such as telephone deception. In 2023, the Force arrested a total of 9 239 persons for involvement in various types of deception and money laundering offences, representing an increase of over 75% compared to 2022. Among these, about 6 500 were stooze account holders. The Force has reached a consensus with the Department of Justice to enhance evidence gathering and prosecution procedures for relatively simple and straightforward money laundering cases involving stooze accounts and to expedite prosecution. Moreover, the Force will continue to apply to the court for enhanced sentencing and has, since 2023, achieved a 20% increase in the sentences of 4 stooze account holders, leading to imprisonment terms ranging from 26 to 38 months.

For intercepting fraud proceeds, the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre continues to assist in minimising victims' losses, intercepting over \$12.5 billion worth of fraud proceed since its inception until the end of last year.

The Force does not maintain a breakdown by type of scam, including telephone deception, on the number of cases detected or the crime proceeds intercepted.

(3) To combat telephone deception, the Force established a dedicated working group with the Office of the Communications Authority and mobile network operators in September 2022, and since then, several initiatives have been implemented. Apart from blocking spoofed calls originating from outside local regions with the prefix "+852", and sending text or voice alerts to users when they receive such calls, mobile network operators have blocked or filtered over 7 600 websites and nearly 3 200 telephone numbers associated with deception cases upon the Force's request by

January 2024 and have been on the technical front, proactively identifying and blocking a significant volume of calls made using technical devices and suspending related services.

The Force has also been proactively using technology to prevent members of the public from being exposed to fraudulent calls. In February 2024, automation elements were incorporated in “Scameter+”, enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich its database, a public “reporting” mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application. The Force will review and update the database periodically to ensure that the data remain accurate and up-to-date.

In addition to stepping up enforcement and enhancing prosecution efficiency, the Force will rigorously combat the use of stooge accounts by deception syndicates in committing crimes through applications for enhanced sentencing. Approaches such as interception of fraudulent payments and upstream scam intervention will be adopted to minimise victims’ losses. Furthermore, the Force will continue to raise anti-deception awareness of members of the public through online and offline publicity and actively seek to maintain close cooperation with stakeholders from various sectors, relevant government departments and other law enforcement agencies, including those in the Mainland and overseas, so as to create synergy in combating deception cases.

The expenditure incurred on the above initiatives forms part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) “Prevention and Detection of Crime”, and the Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved. The Force has no plans to formulate KPIs for specific types of deceptions.

- (4) Enhancing cyber security and combating technology crime are among Commissioner’s Operational Priorities in 2024. The Force will continue to enhance its capability in combating technology crimes and handling cyber security incidents, as well as stepping up collaboration, intelligence exchange and law enforcement with relevant stakeholders and law enforcement agencies, such as the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Hong Kong Productivity Council. In addition, the Cybercrime Policing Advisory Panel (CPAP) of the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB) was set up in December 2022, comprising 12 panel members who are experts and leaders from the academia, the education sector, commercial chambers, the financial sector, the information technology sector, the telecommunications sector and various public entities. The CPAP assists the Force in formulating short, medium and long term strategic directions in order to strengthen the Force’s digital policing capabilities in combating cybercrimes. As of December 2023, 4 meetings had been convened by the CPAP.

On another front, the CSTCB hosted the International Symposium on Cyber Policing in September 2023. The event was attended by over 200 individuals, including 110 senior law enforcement officers, members, experts and academics from the Mainland, Macao, International Criminal Police Organisation and 35 overseas countries, along with approximately 100 local working partners of the Force. During the symposium, 18 distinguished scholars from renowned universities and experts from the cyber technology industry, specialising in digital finance, communications technology, and

cybersecurity, were invited to deliver keynote speeches and lead panel discussions for in-depth exploration into issues related to cyber policing. The symposium not only provided a platform for international law enforcement and public and private organisations to exchange insights but also fostered international collaboration in policing to better tackle the growing trend of cybercrime in an increasingly globalised world. Additionally, the CSTCB has regularly conducted training programmes to bolster police officers' expertise in handling technology crime, with two courses accredited at Level 4 and one at Level 5 of the Qualifications Framework respectively.

To combat the use of artificial intelligence-powered deepfake technology by fraudsters, the Force periodically conducts online patrols to search for fraudulent messages and videos on the Internet. In cases where fraudulent materials are identified, such as advertisements featuring celebrities impersonated to promote suspicious investment products, the Force will swiftly request relevant advertisers and website operators to remove such advertisements and websites, and will actively track down the whereabouts of the fraudsters. In 2023, the Force requested various social media platforms to remove or review over 12 000 fraud-related pages or accounts.

While fraudsters may utilise artificial intelligence-powered deepfake technology, this method is not infallible. For instance, members of the public can challenge someone on a video call to perform specific actions, which can help determine if any part of the image is manipulated. Additionally, heightened vigilance is advised when a relative or friend makes a request for remittance via video or voice recording, with further verification by phone call recommended. The Force also reminds the public to stay alert through the "Cyberdefender" website, its social media platforms, press conferences, as well as TV and radio interviews. By stepping up publicity and educational efforts across various media, the Force is committed to keeping the public informed of the latest artificial intelligence-powered deepfake technology modi operandi, thereby raising their awareness against deception and preventing them from falling victim to scams.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB101

(Question Serial No. 2791)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Would the Hong Kong Police Force provide information, with a breakdown by type of scam, on the number of deception cases reported, the amount of money involved, the numbers of cases detected, the persons arrested and prosecuted, as well as the total amount of crime proceeds recovered for each of the past 3 financial years?

Have the Police conducted analyses or evaluations on the evolving trends of various deception cases, and are there targeted measures in place to combat and detect each type of scam? If so, the details; if not, the reasons.

Please also provide information on the amount of crime proceeds successfully intercepted by the Anti-Deception Alliance, which was jointly established by the Police, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the banking industry, since its inception in November last year. Are there new policies or initiatives aimed at enhancing the interception of crime proceeds, thus minimizing victims' losses as effectively and as swiftly as possible? If so, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

The number of deceptions and frauds reported to the Police Force, the detection rate, the amount involved and the number of persons arrested for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Number of cases	19 249	27 923	39 824
Detection rate	10.6%	12.0%	11.9%
Amount involved (HK\$)	Over 6.4 billion	Over 4.8 billion	9.18 billion
Number of persons arrested	2 835	4 112	7 043

The common types of deception and fraud reported to the Force as well as the amount involved for each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	Number of cases			Amount of losses (HK\$ million)		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Online Deception	13 859	19 599	27 314	2,965.8	3,073.8	5,345.9
Common types of online scam						
E-shopping Fraud	6 120	8 735	8 950	71.5	74.1	190.5
Online Investment Fraud	980	1 884	5 105	472.0	926.5	3,267.4
Phishing Scam (Note)			4 322			102.4
Online Employment Fraud	1 063	2 884	3 518	85.3	459.1	760.2
Social Media Deception	3 638	3 605	3 372	669.4	779.0	745.4
Email Scam	549	391	208	1,538.8	751.1	163.6
Telephone Deception	1 140	2 831	3 213	811.1	1,076.5	1,102.8
Guess Who	497	1 540	2 237	27.5	114.1	188.7
Pretend Officials	641	1 290	969	783.5	962.3	913.8
Detained Son	2	1	7	0.1	0.07	0.3

(Note) Figures related to phishing scam have been maintained by the Force since 2023.

The Force does not maintain any breakdowns of the numbers of cases detected and prosecutions instituted by the above-mentioned types of deception and fraud.

Deception syndicates utilise a multitude of stooze accounts to collect fraudulent payments and launder money. Therefore, targeting stooze accounts is a vital strategy in dismantling the fraud industry chain. In 2023, the Force arrested a total of 9 239 persons for involvement in various types of deception and money laundering offences, representing an increase of over 75% compared to 2022. Among these, about 6 500 were stooze account holders. The Force has reached a consensus with the Department of Justice to enhance evidence gathering and prosecution procedures for relatively simple and straightforward money laundering cases involving stooze accounts and to expedite prosecution. Moreover, the Force will continue to apply to the court for enhanced sentencing and has, since 2023, achieved a 20% increase in the sentences of 4 stooze account holders, leading to imprisonment terms ranging from 26 to 38 months.

In collaboration with stakeholders, the Force is committed to leveraging technology in the fight against deception. Since the establishment of a collaborative working group with the Office of the Communications Authority and mobile network operators, several initiatives have been implemented. Apart from blocking spoofed calls originating from outside local regions with the prefix “+852”, and sending text or voice alerts to users when they receive such calls, mobile network operators have blocked or filtered over 7 600 websites and nearly 3 200 telephone numbers associated with deception cases by January 2024, and have been on the technical front proactively identifying and blocking a significant volume of calls made using technical devices and suspending related services.

Last year, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the banking industry, the Force introduced various anti-deception measures. Notably, in November 2023, the Faster Payment System (FPS) Suspicious Proxy ID Alert was launched, connecting the FPS platform to the “Scameter” database. During online fund transfer via FPS, the matching function of the

database can identify payees whose information is related to scam reports, and an alert message will appear on the confirmation page. By 31 January 2024, this mechanism had issued over 264 000 alerts, flagging high-risk transfers totaling nearly \$410 million. The Force will continue to step up publicity and implement such mechanism in other platforms.

In late November last year, the Force collaborated with 10 major banks in establishing the Anti-Deception Alliance (ADA), where bank representatives are deployed to work in the Police Headquarters to provide more direct and instant communication and assistance in intercepting fraudulent payments and issuing alerts. Since its official launch on 27 November 2023 until the end of January 2024, 95% of payment interception requests has been responded by banks within 2 hours, markedly improving efficiency. In respect of upstream scam intervention, the ADA has proactively prevented 162 persons from making further transfers to fraudsters by the end of January. For intercepting fraud proceeds, the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre continues to assist in minimising victims' losses, intercepting over \$12.5 billion worth of fraud proceed since its inception until the end of last year.

The Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau launched a one-stop scam and pitfall search engine "Scameter" in September 2022 and launched the mobile application version "Scameter+" in February 2023. As at 31 January 2024, "Scameter+" has been downloaded more than 228 000 times, while the search engine has recorded over 2.3 million searches and issued approximately 400 000 alerts on frauds and cyber security risks. In February 2024, automation elements were incorporated in "Scameter+", enabling the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich the database of the search engine, a public "reporting" mechanism has been introduced, allowing members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application.

The Force will continue to place emphasis on combating deception cases. In addition to stepping up enforcement and enhancing prosecution efficiency, the Force will rigorously combat the use of stooge accounts by deception syndicates in committing crimes through applications for enhanced sentencing. Approaches such as interception of fraudulent payments and upstream scam intervention will be adopted to minimise victims' losses. Furthermore, the Force will continue to raise anti-deception awareness of members of the public through online and offline publicity and actively seek to maintain close cooperation with stakeholders from various sectors, relevant government departments and other law enforcement agencies, including those in the Mainland and overseas, so as to create synergy in combating deception cases.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB102

(Question Serial No. 2814)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community
(2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
(3) Road Safety
(4) Operations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

What were the numbers of vacancies in different ranks and grades that were not filled according to the original establishment of the Hong Kong Police Force for 2023-24? What are the estimated numbers, ranks and grades of staff members of the Police Force expected to retire from, and those expected to leave, over the next 3 years? Additionally, what is the anticipated manpower shortage in various ranks and grades at that time?

Apart from relaxing entry requirements and enhancing publicity efforts for recruitment outside the city, what are the Hong Kong Police Force's plans to improve recruitment in the coming year? Please inform this Committee whether the Police have any policy measures, such as streamlining administrative procedures or making good use of new technologies, to reduce manpower requirements. If such measures are in place, please provide details; if not, please explain the reasons.

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 42)

Reply:

At present, there are approximately 6 000 vacancies for police officer posts and approximately 700 vacancies for civilian posts in the Police Force. The number of officers reaching their retirement age in the coming 3 financial years is set out as follows:

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Police officers			
Gazetted officer	19	17	23
Inspectorate officer	27	19	27
Junior police officer	438	393	673
Civilian staff	131	141	103
Total	615	570	826

The Force will fill the vacancies through promotion, recruitment and various service extension measures.

The Force has been adopting proactive recruitment strategies to attract high calibre candidates who have the competence to become a police officer, the affection for the Motherland and Hong Kong, and the passion to serve the public.

Meanwhile, the Force has disseminated recruitment and publicity information through various media and social networking platforms, and has organised regular recruitment activities and projects, such as the Police Recruitment Experience and Assessment Day, Police Mentorship Programme, Police University Recruitment Express, Hong Kong Police University Recruitment Express (Mainland), Diploma of Applied Education – Police Cadet Training, Auxiliary Undergraduate Scheme, Police Recruitment Buddies Scheme, Sportsmen’s Programme for Recruitment, Experience and Development, Auxiliary Police Recruitment Express, education and careers expo as well as publicity videos featuring “Recruitment Spokespersons”, etc.

The Force will continue to adjust its publicity strategy in light of general social conditions such as the economic situation and demand in the labour market.

Moreover, the Force will minimise the need for manpower through re-prioritisation, internal redeployment, streamlining of work processes and enhancement of efficiency.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB103

(Question Serial No. 3285)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the recruitment for the Hong Kong Auxiliary Police Force, please advise this Committee of:

1. the number of applicants to the Auxiliary Police and the number of successful candidates each year for the past 3 years;
2. the wastage of Police Constables (Auxiliary) and Inspectors (Auxiliary) each year for the past 3 years; and
3. the average training cost for each new recruit to the ranks of Police Constable (Auxiliary) and Inspector (Auxiliary).

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

1. The number of applicants to the Auxiliary Police and the number of successful candidates each year for the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Financial year	Number of applicants	Number of successful candidates
2021-22	2 136	331
2022-23	2 301	343
2023-24 (As of 29 February 2024)	2 847	297

2. The annual wastage figures for Police Constables (Auxiliary) and Inspectors (Auxiliary) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Financial year	Number of leavers (including retirees)	
	Police Constables (Auxiliary)	Inspectors (Auxiliary)
2021-22	193	7
2022-23	185	7
2023-24 (As of 29 February 2024)	247	7

3. Currently, Police Constable (Auxiliary) is the only entry rank to the Hong Kong Auxiliary Police Force. New recruits to the rank of Police Constable (Auxiliary) are required to attend a 370-hour salaried Basic Training Course. The starting hourly pay rate for a Police Constable (Auxiliary) in the financial year 2023-24 is \$111.5.

If a Police Constable (Auxiliary) is promoted to Inspector (Auxiliary), a 270-hour Inspectors of Police (Auxiliary) Promotion Course must be attended. The hourly pay rate for an Inspector (Auxiliary) in the financial year 2023-24 is \$274.5.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB104

(Question Serial No. 1399)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): ()
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the initiatives promoting anti-deception, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The number of anti-deception publicity campaigns organised by the Police in the 18 districts over the past 5 years, including the content, numbers of participants and the expenditures of such campaigns, as well as the estimated expenditure for 2024-25;
2. The staff establishment, ranks and expenditure involved in organising anti-deception publicity campaigns in the 18 districts over the past 5 years, alongside the estimated expenditure for 2024-25;
3. The anticipated effectiveness of various anti-deception campaigns as evaluated by the Police, including the trends in deception cases; and
4. Whether the Police intend to integrate and centralise the management of anti-deception publicity campaigns; if so, the details and the expenditure to be involved; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

1. The Police Force has been adopting a multi-agency approach by collaborating with other government departments, regulatory agencies and industry stakeholders to implement anti-crime publicity and educational campaigns. As part of the Force's ongoing efforts to prevent deception, an extensive publicity strategy has been adopted to disseminate anti-deception messages by utilising multiple channels online and offline. This includes broadcasting anti-deception clips and television series; conducting anti-deception talks; producing teaching materials for primary and secondary schools; launching a WhatsApp channel; registering on various social media platforms, such as Xiaohongshu; and holding press conferences on the latest defrauding tricks as well as large-scale publicity campaigns.

In June 2023, the Force, in collaboration with government departments and public and private organisations, recruited and trained SILVERSHIELD ambassadors, utilising community power to spread the message “Scams are rampant; Tell everyone”. To enhance public alertness to phishing scams, the Force launched a new round of anti-deception activities in August, which included the releasing of an anti-deception promotional song by renowned musician. August also marked the “Anti-Money Laundering Month”, during which the Force rolled out a series of promotional activities to remind citizens not to rent, lend or sell their bank accounts. In December, the Force organised the inaugural Anti-Scam Charity Run under the theme of anti-deception, attracting over 1 700 participants. Additionally, at the end of January this year, the Force hosted the CyberDefenders’ Carnival 2024 at HarbourChill Wan Chai to promote cybersecurity awareness, with a total of 8 000 members of the public participating. In February, the “Little Grape Carnival” was held in the West Kowloon Cultural District, featuring “The Little Grape’s Sea, Land and Air Parade” on 18 February, which drew an attendance of more than 25 000 visitors. The latest anti-deception publicity initiatives also encompass various “embedded marketing” methods, such as printing anti-deception messages on coffee cup sleeves provided by coffee shop chains, and the recent commissioning of the anti-deception ferry “Ping On”, which set sail in February this year, marking a novel channel for disseminating anti-deception messages.

The Force will continue to enhance its publicity efforts in a bid to raise the public’s alertness to deceptions and technology crimes.

The Force does not maintain statistics on the details of anti-deception campaigns implemented by various formations at the headquarters, regional and district levels. The expenditure for anti-deception forms part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) “Prevention and Detection of Crime”. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

2. “Enhancing cyber security and fighting technology crime” remains one of the Commissioner’s Operational Priorities (COP) in 2024 and “combating quick cash crime” of the COP 2023 has been amended to “combating deception and quick cash crime”. The Force has been taking proactive measures on all fronts to combat deception. The Commercial Crime Bureau and its Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC), the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau, the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau and the crime investigation units of various police regions and districts are all dedicated to cracking down on deception.

As various formations of the Force are involved in anti-deception publicity and education, a separate breakdown of the manpower involved is not available. For ADCC, which is mainly tasked with the above-mentioned duties, the staff establishment has grown in each of the past 5 years: from 26 in 2019-20 to 49 in 2022-23, with 32 being permanent establishment and 17 on secondment from different Force formations. In 2023-24, the ADCC’s staff establishment expanded further to 90, with permanent establishment increasing by 5 to 37, and the remainder filled by 53 officers on secondment or Post-Retirement Service Contracts. The Force will periodically review the manpower and resources of various formations and adjust the establishment as needed.

The above expenditure forms part of the total expenditure under Programme (2) “Prevention and Detection of Crime”. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

3. Combating deception does not only rely on the publicity and enforcement work done by the Force, but also requires the collective efforts from various stakeholders and regulatory bodies, as well as the enhancement of public awareness against deception. The Force will continue to disseminate the latest anti-deception messages through various channels, step up enforcement and enhance prosecution efficiency. In order to rigorously combat the use of stooge accounts by deception syndicates in committing crimes, applications for enhanced sentencing will be made. Approaches such as interception of fraudulent payments and upstream scam intervention will be adopted to minimise victims’ losses.
4. With a view to bolstering the effectiveness of anti-deception publicity through expanded contact points, the relevant formations at headquarters levels, as well as various police regions and districts, will make concerted efforts in carrying out publicity and education against deception.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB105

(Question Serial No. 1408)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Road Safety

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

The Government indicated in the Legislative Council that the Police Force has been expanding the use of technology (e.g. the e-Ticketing Scheme) to aid enforcement, with the aim of enhancing the Force's efficiency in traffic management. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The number of mobile devices procured (with a breakdown by Police Region) since the launch of the e-Ticketing Scheme in March 2020;
2. The number of complaints received from members of the public about illegal parking (with a breakdown by District Council district) in the past 5 years;
3. The number of black spots for illegal parking identified in various districts across the territory (with a breakdown by District Council district) in the past 5 years; and
4. The number of fixed penalty tickets (FPTs) issued for illegal parking (with a breakdown by District Council district and vehicle type) in various districts across the territory, and the total amount of fines collected in the past 5 years.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

1. The number of portable printers procured for the e-Ticketing Scheme since its launch, with breakdown by Police Region, is tabulated as follows:

Police Region	Number of portable printers
Hong Kong Island	553
Kowloon West	615
Kowloon East	514
New Territories South	721
New Territories North	484
Total	2 887

- The numbers of complaints received by the Police Force from members of the public about traffic obstruction and illegal parking in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 are 198 592, 218 630, 197 360, 168 075 and 142 953 respectively. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of relevant complaint figures by District Council district.
- As the Force has not established a specific definition for an illegal parking “black spot”, data on the number of such locations is not available. The Force is committed to strengthening enforcement in areas with significant traffic congestion, issuing Fixed Penalty Tickets (FPTs) without prior warning to vehicles/drivers causing severe obstructions or posing road safety risks, and, when necessary, towing away illegally parked vehicles.
- The Force maintains records of FPTs issued for illegal parking and other traffic enforcement statistics by Police Region. As such, prosecution figures by District Council district are not available. The number of FPTs for illegal parking issued under the Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contraventions) Ordinance (Cap. 237) by Police Region and vehicle type over the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Police Region	Number of FPTs issued for illegal parking				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Hong Kong Island	287 149	599 218	688 592	624 000	523 167
Kowloon East	251 430	489 901	570 466	555 417	443 038
Kowloon West	339 549	631 593	862 992	1 011 084	960 276
New Territories South	296 732	512 831	584 706	570 895	471 527
New Territories North	249 884	474 326	595 404	602 075	615 011
Total	1 424 744	2 707 869	3 302 160	3 363 471	3 013 019

Vehicle type	Number of FPTs issued for illegal parking				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Private car	992 720	1 977 286	2 180 390	2 061 425	1 786 162
Goods vehicle	338 132	560 073	826 856	956 171	875 438
Taxi	28 612	54 460	73 232	82 856	83 025
Public bus	21 095	23 474	33 675	43 977	53 187
Public light bus	2 074	2 510	3 505	5 668	7 715
Motorcycle	35 695	73 776	171 633	199 734	191 817
Others	6 416	16 290	12 869	13 640	15 675
Total	1 424 744	2 707 869	3 302 160	3 363 471	3 013 019

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB106

(Question Serial No. 2873)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Road Safety

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

Please provide this Committee with the following information for the past 3 years (2022, 2023 and 2024):

1. The number of illegal parking complaints lodged by members of the public across the 18 districts in Hong Kong during the Lunar New Year holidays; and
2. The number of fixed penalty tickets issued for illegal parking across the 18 districts in Hong Kong during the Lunar New Year holidays. Please include a tabulated breakdown by type of traffic contravention leading to the issuance of the tickets, such as illegal parking, double parking, illegal pick-up/drop-off of passengers, loading/unloading of goods in restricted zones and at bus stops, prolonged stopping and waiting, unauthorised entry into yellow box markings or pedestrian crossings, and causing congestion.

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

1&2. The Police Force categorises the figures for complaints about and fixed penalty tickets (FPTs) issued for illegal parking by Police Region and does not maintain these figures with a breakdown by the 18 districts. As the Force is currently compiling the traffic complaint and enforcement data for February 2024, the information for the month of the Lunar New Year holidays in 2024 is not yet available. The number of complaints about traffic obstructions and illegal parking (including double parking) reported by the public to the Police in February 2022 and January 2023 is tabulated as follows:

Number of complaints about traffic obstructions and illegal parking reported by the public		
Police Region	February 2022 (Note)	January 2023 (Note)
Hong Kong Island	1 353	1 589
Kowloon East	2 194	2 383
Kowloon West	2 414	4 089
New Territories South	2 249	2 367
New Territories North	3 214	2 458
Total	11 424	12 886

Note: Lunar New Year holidays for 2022 spanned from 1 to 4 February (covering Lunar New Year's Day through the Fourth Day). For 2023, Lunar New Year holidays spanned from 22 to 25 January (covering Lunar New Year's Day through the Fourth Day).

The number of FPTs issued for illegal parking by the Force under the Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contraventions) Ordinance (Cap. 237) in February 2022 and January 2023 is tabulated as follows:

Number of FPTs issued for illegal parking		
Police Region	February 2022 (Note)	January 2023 (Note)
Hong Kong Island	45 673	45 614
Kowloon East	41 118	42 891
Kowloon West	62 398	79 772
New Territories South	40 196	45 907
New Territories North	39 460	49 546
Total	228 845	263 730

Note: Lunar New Year holidays for 2022 spanned from 1 to 4 February (covering Lunar New Year's Day through the Fourth Day). For 2023, Lunar New Year holidays spanned from 22 to 25 January (covering Lunar New Year's Day through the Fourth Day).

The number of FPTs issued by the Force for 6 congestion-related offences under the Fixed Penalty (Criminal Proceedings) Ordinance (Cap. 240), categorised by Police Region and specific offence, for February 2022 and January 2023 is tabulated as follows:

Police Region	Offence	February 2022 (Note)	January 2023 (Note)
Hong Kong Island	Unlawfully entering box junction	12	21
	Picking up/setting down passengers in restricted zone	228	346
	Loading/unloading goods in restricted zone	56	116
	“U” turn causing obstruction	1	0
	Unauthorised stopping at bus stop/public light bus stand/taxi stand/public light bus stopping place	43	112
	Stopping public bus, public light bus or taxi longer than necessary when picking up/setting down passengers	0	0
	Sub-total	340	595
Kowloon East	Unlawfully entering box junction	1	20
	Picking up/setting down passengers in restricted zone	102	231
	Loading/unloading goods in restricted zone	28	53
	“U” turn causing obstruction	0	0
	Unauthorised stopping at bus stop/public light bus stand/taxi stand/public light bus stopping place	19	34
	Stopping public bus, public light bus or taxi longer than necessary when picking up/setting down passengers	0	0
	Sub-total	150	338
Kowloon West	Unlawfully entering box junction	30	97
	Picking up/setting down passengers in restricted zone	112	151
	Loading/unloading goods in restricted zone	23	25
	“U” turn causing obstruction	0	0
	Unauthorised stopping at bus stop/public light bus stand/taxi stand/public light bus stopping place	59	37
	Stopping public bus, public light bus or taxi longer than necessary when picking up/setting down passengers	0	0
	Sub-total	224	310

Police Region	Offence	February 2022 (Note)	January 2023 (Note)
New Territories South	Unlawfully entering box junction	1	10
	Picking up/setting down passengers in restricted zone	162	172
	Loading/unloading goods in restricted zone	18	31
	“U” turn causing obstruction	0	0
	Unauthorised stopping at bus stop/public light bus stand/taxi stand/public light bus stopping place	6	27
	Stopping public bus, public light bus or taxi longer than necessary when picking up/setting down passengers	0	0
	Sub-total	187	240
New Territories North	Unlawfully entering box junction	17	20
	Picking up/setting down passengers in restricted zone	141	160
	Loading/unloading goods in restricted zone	7	15
	“U” turn causing obstruction	1	0
	Unauthorised stopping at bus stop/public light bus stand/taxi stand/public light bus stopping place	9	22
	Stopping public bus, public light bus or taxi longer than necessary when picking up/setting down passengers	0	0
	Sub-total	175	217
Total		1 076	1 700

Note: Lunar New Year holidays for 2022 spanned from 1 to 4 February (covering Lunar New Year’s Day through the Fourth Day). For 2023, Lunar New Year holidays spanned from 22 to 25 January (covering Lunar New Year’s Day through the Fourth Day).

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB179

(Question Serial No. 3534)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the Police's efforts on maintenance of law and order in the community, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. It is mentioned under Programme (1) that there will be a decrease of 23 posts. Please provide details of the respective ranks, formations and duties, as well as the measures in place to maintain current service standards with reduced manpower;
2. Whether the Police have explored the use of technology to enhance its capability in responding to emergency calls in the past year; and
3. Further to the above, whether the response time to emergency calls has been shortened and if the indicators for responding to 999 telephone calls have been enhanced; if so, the details and expenditure involved; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 55)

Reply:

1. In 2024-25, there will be a net decrease of 23 posts (involving creation of 16 disciplined services posts and 3 civilian posts and reduction of 42 civilian posts) on the staff establishment under Programme (1) "Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community". Details on the number of posts to be created and the salaries involved are set out in the following table:

Rank	Number of posts to be created	Police Pay Scale (PPS)/ Master Pay Scale (MPS)	Monthly salary for the rank in HK\$ (from 1 April 2023)
Superintendent	1	PPS 50 – 53	128,510 – 144,440
Chief Inspector	1	PPS 44 – 49	100,200 – 123,905
Senior Inspector/Inspector	2	PPS 24 – 43	50,500 – 96,600
Sergeant	4	PPS 17 – 28	41,155 – 59,080
Police Constable	8	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	16		
Supplies Assistant	1	MPS 1 – 10	14,735 – 25,815
Police Translator I	1	MPS 22 – 27	47,795 – 60,065
Police Translator II	1	MPS 10 – 21	25,815 – 45,640
Total (civilian staff)	3		
Total	19		

Details on the number of posts to be reduced and the salaries involved are set out in the following table:

Rank	Number of posts to be reduced	Master Pay Scale (MPS)/ Model Scale 1 Pay Scale (MOD)	Monthly salary for the rank in HK\$ (from 1 April 2023)
Office Assistant	-13	MPS 1 – 6	14,735 – 20,165
Typist	-7	MPS 2 – 10	15,665 – 25,815
Artisan	-1	MPS 5 – 8	18,965 – 22,895
Workman I	-1	MOD 3 – 13	15,690 – 19,175
Workman II	-20	MOD 0 – 8	14,730 – 17,355
Total (civilian staff)	-42		

For operational effectiveness, it is inappropriate to disclose the details on the reduction of establishment in individual formations.

To continuously enhance its efficiency, the Police Force has developed comprehensive human resources and strategic plans that cover various aspects, including staff training and career development. Officers are encouraged to pursue self-advancement and strengthen their professional capacity so as to serve members of the public more effectively. The Force deploys resources flexibly in response to policing needs, ensuring that the community's service demands are effectively met. In general, policing services will not be affected by the reduction in establishment.

- Since October 2023, the Force has fully rolled out the Advanced Mobile Location Services. When a member of the public makes a 999 call using a smartphone to seek assistance, the 999 Reporting Centre simultaneously receives the caller's geolocation, significantly enhancing operational effectiveness in responding to emergency calls.

In January 2024, the Force launched the “HKSOS Mobile Application”, which is specially designed for outdoor activities to assist the public in planning their journeys and safeguard their lives. When a member of the public requests assistance through the application, the 999 Reporting Centre immediately receives the itinerary and location shared by the member of the public, thereby assisting search and rescue personnel in locating the person in need of help as soon as possible.

To assist the hearing and speech impaired persons in sending help-seeking messages to the 999 Reporting Centre, the Force has enhanced the HKSOS application to provide 9 categories of help-seeking messages in graphics and text, such as fractures, severe bleeding and breathing difficulties, for selection by users and to transmit the user’s geolocation when seeking assistance.

Furthermore, the Force is actively developing the Next Generation Emergency Telephone System, including a platform for handling multimedia data, which will provide an additional means for members of the public to transmit multimedia data to the 999 Reporting Centre.

3. As outlined in the Performance Pledge for 999 emergency calls, the Force strives to answer all 999 calls within 9 seconds and respond to all genuine emergency 999 calls within an average response time of 9 minutes in Hong Kong and Kowloon and 15 minutes in the New Territories. The response time is measured from the time a report is received at the 999 console of the Regional Command and Control Centre to the arrival of police officers at the scene.

In 2023, the 999 console of the Force’s Regional Command and Control Centre answered 2 568 591 calls for assistance, with an average answer time of 7.8 seconds. Of these, 81 659 calls were emergency calls requiring police follow-up, with over 98.1% responded to within the time stipulated in the Performance Pledge.

The Hong Kong Police Force’s standard of the Performance Pledge for emergency call services is on par with, or even surpasses, that of other major cities worldwide. For example, in London and Singapore, the target response times for the police in answering 999 calls and responding to emergency requests are 10 seconds and 15 minutes respectively. The Force continuously reviews the 999 emergency services and is committed to providing the public with prompt and efficient services.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB180

(Question Serial No. 3538)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses
Programme: (2) Prevention and Detection of Crime
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the Police's efforts on prevention and detection of crime, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. Details on the respective ranks, formations and duties in respect of the increase of 7 posts under Programme (2);
2. Whether the Police have introduced new technologies to enhance enforcement capabilities in tackling technology crime in the past year; if so, the details of the technologies, the expenditure involved, and the specific strategies implemented to enhance the professional knowledge of investigating officers in tackling technology crime;
3. The staff establishment, relevant expenditure, and specific work effectiveness of the "e-Crime Processing and Analysis Hub" and the "Anti-Deception Coordination Centre" in the past year; and whether the Police will consider adjusting the staff establishment of these two centres in the coming year to address the increasing number of deception cases; and
4. Further to the above, whether the Police will review the effectiveness of the various existing anti-deception and anti-crime publicity campaigns.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 59)

Reply:

1. In 2024-25, there will be a net increase of 7 posts (comprising an increase of 28 posts of police officers and a decrease of 3 posts of police officers and 18 civilian posts) on the staff establishment under Programme (2) "Prevention and Detection of Crime". Of the 28 police officer posts to be created, 3 will be under the Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC) of the Commercial Crime Bureau and 8 will be under the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB) for enhancing territory-wide anti-deception capability; while the other 17 will be under the CSTCB for discharging cyber security work in relation to the 15th National Games in 2025.

Details on the posts to be created and the salaries involved are tabulated as follows:

Rank	Number of posts to be created	Police Pay Scale (PPS)	Monthly salary for the rank (HK\$) (from 1 April 2023)
Chief Inspector	1	PPS 44 – 49	100,200 – 123,905
Senior Inspector/Inspector	4	PPS 24 – 43	50,500 – 96,600
Station Sergeant	3	PPS 24 – 33a	50,500 – 74,590
Sergeant	12	PPS 17 – 28	41,155 – 59,080
Police Constable	8	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	28		

Details on the posts to be reduced and the salaries involved are set out in the following table:

Rank	Number of posts to be reduced	Police Pay Scale (PPS)/ Master Pay Scale (MPS)/ Model Scale 1 Pay Scale (MOD)	Monthly salary for the rank (HK\$) (from 1 April 2023)
Police Constable	-3	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	-3		
Total (civilian officers)	-18	MPS 1 – 24 MOD 3 – 13	14,735 – 52,410 15,690 – 19,175
Total	-21		

- “Enhancing cyber security and combating technology crime” is among Commissioner’s Operational Priorities in 2024. The Police Force has been taking proactive measures on all fronts to combat deception and technology crimes, such as striving to leverage technology in collaboration with relevant stakeholders in the fight against deception and technology crimes. Notably, in November 2023, the Force collaborated with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the banking sector to launch the Faster Payment System (FPS) Suspicious Proxy ID Alert, thereby connecting the FPS platform to the “Scameter” database. During online fund transfer via FPS, the matching function of the database can identify payees whose information is related to scam reports, and an alert message will appear on the confirmation page. By 31 January 2024, this mechanism had issued over 264 000 alerts, flagging high-risk transfers totalling nearly \$410 million. The Force will continue to step up publicity and implement such mechanism in other platforms.

In September 2022, the CSTCB launched “Scameter”, a one-stop scam and pitfall search engine, followed by its mobile application “Scameter+” in February 2023. As at 31 January 2024, “Scameter+” has surpassed 228 000 downloads, while “Scameter” has logged 2.3 million searches and issued nearly 400 000 alerts on frauds and cybersecurity risks. In February 2024, the Force optimised the functions of “Scameter+” by incorporating automation elements, which enable the application to issue alerts when users browse suspicious websites and receive suspicious calls. To further enrich the

database of “Scameter+”, the Force has also introduced a public “reporting” mechanism for members of the public to report suspicious websites or calls through the application. The Force will continue to explore advanced technological applications to combat deception and fraud.

The Force will also continue to enhance its capability in combating technology crimes and handling cybersecurity incidents, as well as stepping up collaboration, intelligence exchange and law enforcement with relevant stakeholders and law enforcement agencies, such as the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Hong Kong Productivity Council. In addition, the Cybercrime Policing Advisory Panel (CPAP) of the CSTCB was set up in December 2022, comprising 12 panel members who are experts and leaders from the academia, the education sector, commercial chambers, the financial sector, the information technology sector, the telecommunications sector and various public entities. The CPAP assists the Force in formulating short, medium and long term strategic directions in order to strengthen the Force’s digital policing capabilities in combating cybercrimes. As of December 2023, 4 meetings had been convened by the CPAP.

On another front, the CSTCB hosted the International Symposium on Cyber Policing in September 2023. The event was attended by over 200 individuals, including 110 senior law enforcement officers, members, experts and academics from the Mainland, Macao, INTERPOL and 35 overseas countries, along with approximately 100 local working partners of the Force. During the symposium, 18 distinguished scholars from renowned universities and experts from the cyber technology industry, specialising in digital finance, communications technology, and cybersecurity, were invited to deliver keynote speeches and lead panel discussions for in-depth exploration into issues related to cyber policing. The symposium not only provided a platform for international law enforcement and public and private organisations to exchange insights but also fostered international collaboration in policing to better address the evolving trends of cybercrime in the context of globalization. Additionally, the CSTCB has regularly conducted training programmes to bolster police officers’ expertise in handling technology crime, with two courses accredited at Level 4 and one at Level 5 of the Qualifications Framework respectively.

3. Currently, the Commercial Crime Bureau and its ADCC, the CSTCB, the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau, as well as the crime investigation units of various Police Regions and Districts are all dedicated to cracking down on scams and technology-related crimes.

To further enhance the Force’s capabilities in combating deception, the e-Crime Processing and Analysis Hub (E-Hub) was established in September 2022 as a one-stop platform to handle all e-reports of technology crime and deception. Through an optimised computer system, correlation analysis is undertaken to identify relevant case clusters for consolidated investigation, with a view to focusing resources on following up the cases more swiftly and efficiently, thereby enhancing the Force’s effectiveness in handling technology crimes and deceptions. The E-Hub has been operating smoothly since its establishment and the e-Report Centre has been widely used by the public. Specifically, e-reports on technology crimes and deceptions have increased from a monthly average of about 2 200 prior to the establishment of the E-Hub to

roughly 3 700 at present. As of 31 January 2024, the E-Hub has received 59 357 e-reports on technology crimes and deceptions, all of which have been followed up in due course. Meanwhile, the E-Hub has been maintaining close co-operation with the ADCC on interception of fraud proceeds. As of 31 January 2024, more than \$670 million worth of crime proceeds have been successfully intercepted in 269 technology crime and deception-related e-reporting cases.

In November 2023, the Force collaborated with 10 major banks in establishing the Anti-Deception Alliance (ADA), where bank representatives are deployed to work in the Police Headquarters to provide more direct and instant communication and assistance in intercepting fraudulent payments and issuing alerts. Since its official launch on 27 November 2023 until the end of January 2024, the response time for 95% of payment interception requests has been reduced to within 2 hours, markedly improving efficiency. In respect of upstream scam intervention, the ADA has proactively prevented 162 persons from making further transfers to fraudsters by the end of January. For intercepting fraud proceeds, the ADCC continues to assist in minimising victims' losses, intercepting over \$12.5 billion worth of fraud proceed since its inception until the end of last year.

In 2023-24, the staff establishment of the ADCC expanded from 49 in the previous financial year to 90, with permanent posts increasing by 5 to 37, and the remainder filled by 53 officers on secondment from different Force formations or Post-Retirement Service Contracts. In 2024-25, the number of permanent posts in the ADCC will increase by 3 to 40, whereas the establishment of the E-hub will be expanded from 26 since its inception in September 2022 to 28, among which 1 is permanent post and the remainder filled by officers on secondment from different Force formations.

The Force will periodically review the manpower and resources allocated to various formations and adjust the establishment in light of the latest crime trends and policing needs.

4. The Force has been adopting a multi-agency approach by collaborating with other government departments, regulatory agencies and industry stakeholders to implement anti-crime publicity and educational campaigns. As part of the Force's ongoing efforts to prevent deception, an extensive publicity strategy has been adopted to disseminate anti-deception messages by utilising multiple channels, both online and offline, with a view to enhancing public awareness of anti-deception. This includes broadcasting anti-deception clips and television series; conducting anti-deception talks; producing teaching materials for primary and secondary schools; launching a WhatsApp channel; registering on various social media platforms, such as Xiaohongshu; and holding press conferences on the latest defrauding tricks as well as large-scale publicity campaigns. The Force will from time to time review the effectiveness of these initiatives.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB181

(Question Serial No. 3539)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Road Safety

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

Regarding the Police's efforts on road safety, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. Details on the respective ranks, formations and duties in respect of the decrease of 29 posts under Programme (3), as well as the measures in place to maintain current service standards with reduced manpower; and
2. It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Police will enhance the efficiency and overall accuracy of traffic enforcement through the wider use of technology, including e-Ticketing. In this connection, please provide information on the specific plans and the estimated expenditure, the manpower expected to be saved, as well as whether indicators have been established to measure effectiveness and accuracy of these initiatives.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 60)

Reply:

1. In 2024-25, there will be a net decrease of 29 posts (including an increase of 3 civilian posts and a decrease of 2 disciplined services posts as well as 30 civilian posts) under Programme (3) "Road Safety". Details on the posts to be reduced and the salaries involved are tabulated as follows:

Rank	Number of posts to be reduced	Police Pay Scale (PPS)/ Master Pay Scale (MPS)/ Model Scale I Pay Scale (MOD)	Monthly salary for the rank in HK\$ (from 1 April 2023)
Senior Inspector/ Inspector	-1	PPS 24 – 43	50,500 – 96,600
Police Constable	-1	PPS 4 – 17	28,095 – 41,155
Total (police officers)	-2		
Office Assistant	-3	MPS 1 – 6	14,735 – 20,165
Senior Typist	-1	MPS 11 – 15	27,405 – 34,060
Typist	-10	MPS 2 – 10	15,665 – 25,815
Artisan	-6	MPS 5 – 8	18,965 – 22,895
Property Attendant	-10	MOD 3 – 13	15,690 – 19,175
Total (civilian staff)	-30		
Total	-32		

For operational effectiveness, it is inappropriate to disclose other information requested in the question.

The Police Force has formulated comprehensive human resources and strategic plans for staff training, career development, among others, to continuously enhance the its capability. Officers are encouraged to make self-advancement and strengthen their own professional capacity so as to serve members of the public more effectively. The Force flexibly allocates resources to meet the policing needs and ensure community service needs are effectively met. In general, policing services will not be affected by the establishment adjustments.

- Since March 2020, the Force has launched in phases the e-Ticketing Pilot Scheme in all police districts across the territory. Frontline enforcement officers have since been able to access or input data on illegally parked vehicles via their mobile devices and instantly print out fixed penalty tickets (FPTs) in order to reduce human errors in issuing handwritten FPTs, thereby enhancing the overall enforcement accuracy.

Under the current legislation, the Force is required to issue handwritten FPTs/notices demanding payment of fixed penalty only for traffic contraventions under Cap. 237 and Cap. 240. Meanwhile, in December 2023, the Government introduced the Electronic Traffic Enforcement (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill into the Legislative Council (LegCo) to provide legal basis for the issuance of electronic FPTs. The bill is currently considered by the LegCo for enactment. Our goal is to gradually implement the Electronic Traffic Enforcement in 2024 after the bill is passed by the LegCo.

In June 2021, a new commitment of \$352 million was secured from the Finance Committee of the LegCo for the development of the Traffic e-Enforcement System. The system comprises 3 main components: (1) an e-Ticketing system that digitises the frontline enforcement process; (2) an internal centralised Force platform for managing

all the relevant data and inquiries related to traffic enforcement; and (3) a dedicated website and mobile application that provides a one-stop service for the public. With the full implementation of the System and e-Ticketing, it is anticipated that the number of supporting civilian staff at the Force's Central Traffic Prosecutions Division can be reduced. The time saved by frontline officers through e-Ticketing can be allocated to other police duties such as responding to calls for assistance from the public.

The Force is committed to adopting a "result-oriented" enforcement approach when formulating the overall traffic policing strategy, with a view to reducing the number of persons killed and seriously injured in traffic accidents as well as changing the irresponsible behaviour of road users causing obstruction on roads. The proportion of complaints about data errors in printed FPTs has been relatively lower compared to those for handwritten FPTs since the implementation of the e-Ticketing Pilot Scheme. The Force has not established any other indicators to measure the effectiveness or accuracy of issuing FPTs.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB182

(Question Serial No. 3841)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Road Safety

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

Will the Government inform this Committee of:
the number of persons penalised for using electric mobility devices on roads under the relevant legislation over the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 52)

Reply:

Combatting the illegal use of electric mobility devices is among the Police Force's Selected Traffic Enforcement Priorities. The number of persons arrested for illegal use of electric mobility devices over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

2021	2022	2023
207	236	267

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB183

(Question Serial No. 3777)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (1) that the Police Force will continue to identify and implement measures to ensure effective and flexible tasking of front-line officers to enhance supervision, deployment and distribution of workload. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) the staff establishment and estimated expenditure of all Police Regions and the respective police stations in Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); and
- 2) whether resources have been deployed in a timely manner according to the population growth trends in various districts; if so, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 50)

Reply:

- 1) The yearly distribution of the Police Force's establishment (as at 31 December), categorised by rank and region, is detailed in the appendices of the *Hong Kong Police Review*. For information on the staff establishment of all police districts in the territory for 2021 to 2022, please refer to the *Hong Kong Police Review* available on the Force's website (https://www.police.gov.hk/ppp_en/01_about_us/police_review.html). The staff establishment, including both police officers and civilian staff, for all police regions and their respective police districts in 2023, is tabulated as follows:

Police Districts	Establishment (As at 31 December 2023)	
	Police Officers	Civilian Staff
Central District	875	75
Eastern District	781	69
Wan Chai District	756	88
Western District	781	65
Hong Kong Island Region Headquarters	1 186	198
Hong Kong Island Region Total	4 379	495
Kwun Tong District	436	41
Railway District	458	27
Sau Mau Ping District	631	57
Tseung Kwan O District	482	48
Wong Tai Sin District	802	68
Kowloon East Region Headquarters	985	91
Kowloon East Region Total	3 794	332
Kowloon City District	872	86
Mong Kok District	762	83
Sham Shui Po District	946	81
Yau Tsim District	1 091	99
Kowloon West Region Headquarters	1 440	280
Kowloon West Region Total	5 111	629
Border District	1 107	98
Tai Po District	838	64
Tuen Mun District	786	62
Yuen Long District	1 106	80
New Territories North Region Headquarters	1 345	268
New Territories North Region Total	5 182	572
Airport District	498	43
Kwai Tsing District	757	61
Lantau District	452	39
Shatin District	879	72
Tsuen Wan District	625	51
New Territories South Region Headquarters	1 146	98
New Territories South Region Total	4 357	364
Outer Waters District	1 127	63
Port District	672	37
Marine Region	519	69
Marine Region Total	2 318	169
Other Departments Total	8 118	2 172
Grand Total	33 259	4 733

The estimated expenditures of all police regions form part of the total expenditure under the Programme “Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community”. The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

- 2) The Force will review the manpower and resources of all police districts from time to time, and adjust the staff establishment and redeploy resources flexibly according to policing needs in view of factors such as crime trends, infrastructural developments, population growth and geographical characteristics.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB184

(Question Serial No. 3620)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Road Safety

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-yee)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the policy purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

Under the Road Traffic (Expressway) Regulations, drivers must keep to the left-most lane of an expressway unless they are heading for a right side exit or overtaking another vehicle, in order to enhance road safety and maintain smooth traffic flow on expressways. However, there have been instances where drivers misuse the fast lanes for an extended period, which has directly or indirectly led to traffic accidents. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The number of traffic accidents and casualties in each of the past 3 years involving vehicles following too closely in the fast lane of expressways, including the number of those involving chain collisions among multiple vehicles;
2. The number of law enforcement actions taken against the prolonged misuse of fast lanes in each of the past 3 years, broken down by Police's regional traffic formation;
3. The number of drivers prosecuted for not keeping to the left-most lane on expressways;
4. Prolonged misuse of fast lanes is not only a violation of the law, but also an indication of inadequate driving knowledge and poor driving attitudes among drivers. Please advise whether educational and publicity work has been conducted for drivers, in addition to law enforcement, in the past 5 years; if so, the details; if not, the reason(s); and
5. Whether the law enforcement agencies will consider introducing the use of technologies for enforcement purposes to enhance prosecution efforts against the prolonged misuse of fast lanes.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 131)

Reply:

1. The number of traffic accidents and injuries involving “vehicles following too closely on expressways” for each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	2021	2022	2023
Number of traffic accidents	353	241	340
Number of injuries involved	573	410	557

Note: No fatalities resulted from traffic accidents involving “vehicles following too closely on expressways”.

2. As the Police Force does not maintain data on “enforcement actions taken against the prolonged misuse of fast lanes”, a specific breakdown is not available.
3. The number of the Force’s enforcement actions taken against drivers “not complying with the restriction on vehicles using the right-most lane on a left-driving expressway” for each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	2021	2022	2023
Number of enforcement actions taken	3 874	4 469	4 791

4. The Force always attaches great importance to road safety and strives to raise drivers’ awareness and curb irresponsible driving through publicity, education and enforcement actions. Collaborating with various government departments and bodies (including the Transport Department and the Road Safety Council), the Force engages in promotional and educational campaigns by leveraging online platforms, social media and publicity materials, and disseminating videos and safety information to remind drivers to adhere to traffic laws. Going forward, the Force will persist in advocating for safe driving among all stakeholders and will continue to monitor and analyse traffic accident data and facts to implement measures addressing emerging trends.
5. The Force embraces technological advancements for traffic enforcement and draws on the experiences of international law enforcement agencies to consider the adoption of new technologies that enhance enforcement efficiency.

To ensure the safety of road users, the Force strategically targets offences like “failing to comply with the restriction on vehicles using the right-most lane on left-driving expressways”. Additionally, mobile devices, including in-car video recording systems, are utilised for ad hoc enforcement operations. Such measures are designed to keep drivers vigilant, thereby mitigating the risk of traffic accidents.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB185

(Question Serial No. 3621)

Head: (122) Hong Kong Police Force

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Road Safety

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Police (SIU Chak-ye)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

[Note: The question below concerns matters under the purview of the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB) and the Environmental Protection Department (EPD). The reply was prepared by the Hong Kong Police Force upon consultation with the EPD and vetted by the TLB.]

Question:

Given Hong Kong's dense population, illegal road racing during the early hours and the intentional emission of excessive noise by vehicles have caused significant disturbances to residents living near major roads and expressways. In addressing the issue of vehicular noise nuisance, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The number of complaints received about illegal road racing or vehicular noise in the past 3 years;
2. The total number of enforcement actions taken and prosecutions initiated by the Police's Regional Traffic Formations in the past 3 years;
3. Whether there are currently any identified black spots for vehicular noise nuisance in Hong Kong; if so, please provide details; if not, please advise whether a mechanism will be established; and
4. Noting that law enforcement agencies of some countries and regions have utilised technology such as noise-detecting cameras to capture evidence of excessively loud vehicles and issue fixed penalty tickets upon investigation, please advise whether similar technologies will be introduced to Hong Kong.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 132)

Reply:

1. The Police Force does not maintain information on complaints about illegal road racing or vehicular noise.

2. The figures on enforcement actions taken by the Force against speeding by police region for the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Police Region	Enforcement figures on speeding		
	2021	2022	2023
Hong Kong Island	24 563	29 380	19 793
Kowloon East	47 728	43 132	50 576
Kowloon West	49 005	70 508	58 089
New Territories South	50 114	47 211	53 898
New Territories North	94 923	75 052	71 215
Total	266 333	265 283	253 571

The Force does not maintain a breakdown of the figures on illegal road racing.

- 3-4. The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has all along been keeping abreast of the development of overseas technologies in monitoring excessive noise emitted from modified vehicles. The EPD has applied artificial intelligence in recent years in analysing sounds and images and developed technology to automatically identify illegally modified vehicles that emit excessive noise. The Force will continue to keep in view technological developments (including those developed by the EPD) and introduce suitable technologies to facilitate law enforcement in a timely manner.

- End -